

Lower Division Updates....

The Nursery class has begun reading *The Very Hungry Caterpillar*, by Eric Carle. Students are busy creating a wall mural which corresponds to what they are reading. Nursery rhymes have also been enjoyed by the children. "Humpty Dumpty" and "Mary Had A Little Lamb" are two of their favorites. Each child recreated a Humpty Dumpty and a furry little lamb to be used in

the recitation of poems. Spring time weather has been another focus in the Nursery class. Growing flowers, sunshine, and rain have been the topics of discussion. Butterflies, ladybugs, bees, and dragonflies have been the new art creations. The children have been on the lookout for spring time insects when out in the playground. Appropriate dress for rain is a frequent discussion during class time due to the recent rainy April days. Each child created a boy or girl dressed in a raincoat, rain hat, and boots carrying an umbrella.

The Pre-K class has been having fun welcoming spring. They decorated spring baskets with flowers and bunnies in anticipation of finding them filled with special spring time treats. In celebration of Eric Carle's fortieth anniversary of *The Very Hungry Caterpillar*, the students read the book and reenacted the story using a caterpillar puppet and giant cardboard foods. Everyone was surprised to see the caterpillar turn inside out and reappear as a beautiful butterfly. This will begin a unit on the stages of metamorphosis. In science class, the children have been learning about healthy nutrition. Making good food choices is an important part of life. The students are well on their way to learning how to make healthy choices. In math class, the children have been learning about patterns and pairs. Many connections have been made throughout each day. In celebration of Earth Day, the Pre-K students have been exploring various types of seeds. Many different kinds of flower seeds were planted by every child and some have even begun to grow. It has been so much fun watering them and checking on them everyday. The next planting project will be vegetables. After careful examination of the growth process, the students will cook many different vegetables to see how tasty they really can be.

The Kindergarten class had two special guests visit them this month. Clarissa McCoy's aunt, a retired principal and amazing storyteller, Ms. Gloria Powell,

returned to Kindergarten to read the children a leprechaun story. The students were excited to see her again. She presented them with green hats and shamrocks which they wore for their March 17th parade. The other special guest was the aunt of Alessandro Figueroa, Claudia DeMonte. Ms. DeMonte, an artist and curator, visited the class and talked about her travels collecting handmade dolls from women all over the world. She had remarkable stories, and the children had many questions to ask her. Ms. DeMonte left the students a project to do for Women's History month.

The class created pictures of important women in their lives. In addition, the Kindergarten class has been learning about ecology. They are identifying pollutants and learning ways to care for the environment. They enjoyed the literature stories, *Just a Dream*, by Chris Van Allsburg and *The Lorax*, by Dr. Seuss that connected imagination to real life issues. Their reading and writing skills are advancing quickly. They continue to learn more complex phonics skills including diagraphs and letter blends



The Pre-K and Kindergarten classes have been learning about friendship and diversity. Respect for friends is an important part of school. The children have been learning how to be a good friend to their classmates. On Thursday, March 26th, both classes took a trip to Madison Square Garden to see the *Wizard of Oz*. The students were able to make many connections with the friendship lessons learned in school to Dorothy and her diverse friends. Caring, loyalty, and commitment were some of the values that were noted.

The Early Childhood Department participated in a school wide International Night on Friday, March 27th. Garden families, friends, administration, and faculty donated food from their heritage countries for this event. Students, along with their friends and families, were able to go from room to room sampling exotic dishes as well as decadent desserts. At the same time, upstairs in the gym, the lower division was busy with activities, games, music, etc. Displays were set up representing each continent around the world. Students were issued passports as they entered. Moving from continent to continent, each student was given a stamp in a passport for trying an activity or playing a new game. Games such as "Kangaroo Jump," "Kiss the Blarney Stone" or "Shooting Hoops" and crafts such as "Decorate the Vi-

*Headmaster's Column**Cont. from Page 1*

PTA Elections

night, we believe that we can achieve our goal of raising the \$56,000 that we need.

What makes this effort so special is that all the segments of our community are coming together to make this a success. The project first took shape within a parent-teacher-administrator committee. Now the Student Council has dedicated its 'game night' fundraiser for the technology program. In addition, the Student Council has arranged a class competition to support the Walkathon. The PTA has dedicated all of the funds from the Walkathon for the technology project. We are asking alumni to contribute to our plan, and we have contacted an alumni-family foundation for major support.

With all of this support we can purchase 14+ new computers, new servers, install business quality wireless routers and add a high-speed color printer. With our goal of \$56,000, we will be able to purchase, install and train our teachers in the use of Smart Boards.

Next week, parent reps will call all families to ask for help in support of our technology project. With a successful fundraising campaign, work can begin on the technology project the day after the Walkathon.

A nominating committee has been formed to canvas the present officers and to solicit additional parents interested in serving as officers of the PTA for the 2009/2010 school year. The slate of officers will be proposed at the next PTA meeting.

If you are interested in any of the positions, President, Vice President, Recording Secretary, Corresponding Secretary and Treasurer, please email Mr. Vogel at wvogel@gardenschool.org and provide a brief description of your interest and background.



***Support the Walk for
Technology
Another way to help....***



***Designer Sunglasses & Handbags
available for sale
in our***

***“Library Boutique”
Wednesday and Thursday, April 29th and 30th***

Details will be emailed shortly



Talent Show

On Tuesday, April 21st, 2009, the Lower Division of Garden School presented its annual Talent Show. After four weeks of hard work and dedication, the performers, consisting of students from grades 1-6, astonished their crowd with an array of abilities. From dancing to singing, juggling to comedy, the students displayed a variety of talents as diverse as the student body itself, which is a testament to what our school has to offer.

Not only did the students work hard throughout the weeks of preparation on their own acts, they also came together as a group to assist each other. What a wonderful sight it was to see fourth graders helping second graders set up their acts, as well as fifth graders ensuring that third graders were safely escorted to and from practices. The Talent Show had become more than a mix of skills representing diverse backgrounds, for it emerged as a gathering of administration, faculty, students, parents, and friends...a sea of smiling faces enjoying each other's company amongst the delightfully adept performances prepared by all of the participants from our Garden School community.



Jerome Dineen '14—Alex Hall '14— & Michael Colea '09
at International Night

Coffee and...

On April 21, Garden hosted the third installment of the new "Coffee" series, which is designed to provide parents and guardians with information about specific programs within the school. This week's program, "Coffee and Technology," was an overview of the technology that is currently being used at Garden. The program seemed especially timely in light of next month's Walk-a-Thon for Technology, which will support Garden's expanded technology use in the future.

During the course of the 45-minute discussion, parents and faculty had the opportunity to talk about e-mail, enhancements to the Garden School website, the school-wide upgrade to FIOS internet, digital science equipment and other ways in which technology is used to enhance learning and communication within the Garden community. Proposed changes for the 2009-1020 academic year, such as additional blogs and the ability to make on-line payments were also part of the agenda.

More than just a presentation, "Coffee and Technology" was a forum for the interchange of ideas between families and the school. The last "Coffee" of this school year, "Coffee with the Trustees" will be held at 7:45am on May 19



Lower Division Highlights

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king” or “Boomerang Making” were some of the exciting events in which they participated.

First, second and third graders have been discussing community and how to treat other people. On Monday, all three grades came together and worked in smaller groups of mixed grades to discuss feelings and solutions to problems of name-calling, exclusion and bullying. Students acted out scenarios and discussed resolutions for situations often encountered in everyday life.

After finishing *Little Nino's Pizzeria*, first grade began a discussion on proper restaurant manners. Along with *Chicken Fingers*, *Mac and Cheese* *Why Do We*



Always Have to Say Cheese, we were able to decide on 12 behaviors to remember for a pleasant dining experience. To expand on the idea of manners we made a friendship pizza. The sauce contains the friendly actions like waving, shaking hands and shar-

ing. The peppers have friendly words such as welcome, hello and may I. Hugs and smiles can be found in the cheese. The class was also able to incorporate some of their math skills when reading this book. They practiced telling time with how long pizzas cook and how long it takes to deliver pizzas. Fractions were previewed after making healthy pizzas for lunch.

The second grade has been working on perfecting the art of the paragraph with proper indentation, capitalization of proper nouns, period placement and apostrophes that show possession. Students have been learning what it means to revise and proofread their own work. The subject matter of these paragraphs has included advice on how to be a good citizen of the world and our community, how to avoid being a bully, how to be a good friend and how to care for our environment. Because of Earth Day, the class has discussed what our roles as citizens of the world are and how these roles extend themselves to the community, school and classroom.

The Third graders have been studying the Fairy Tale genre. They have analyzed the elements of a Fairy Tale. Then they read aloud and discussed numerous versions of several classic fairy tales such as: *Little Red Riding Hood*, *The Three Little Pigs*, *Jack and the Beanstalk*, *Cinderella* and *Rumpelstilkin*. They used Venn diagrams to compare and contrast the similarities and differences between each version of the stories. The students made Character maps of their favorite charac-

ters and shared with the class the positive character traits that they possess such as kindness, courtesy and respect, which help them solve their problems

The fourth grade has been studying US regions throughout the year. They are now studying the Northeast. Students know how to identify states, capitals, and regional characteristics such as climate and landforms. The fourth grade will wrap up its year long study of our country with a cumulative project in a few weeks.

The fifth grade has been busy reviewing the causes and effects of the Civil War. Students read excerpts from *The Gettysburg Address* and analyzed the effects of the war including: Reconstruction, constitutional amendments, and the assassination of Lincoln. These lessons are especially meaningful as students will be touring the Gettysburg town that bore witness to the war's bloodiest, yet most decisive battle.

The sixth grade was reviewing the cause and effects of the World Wars. Students looked at maps to solidify knowledge about alliance systems; they studied acts of neutrality and aggression. Sixth graders had to research WWII and create a collage of the Dust Bowl, Great Depression, WWII, or the Cold War. Through this research visually driven project students could further their comprehension of what leads to war and the images they chose represented the heart of their studies. Students will also get a chance to see history up close and personal when on tour of our capital. They will visit the Holocaust Museum, WWII Memorial, and other museum exhibitions regarding this turbulent era.



A scheduled day of organized games and events on our playing field and in the gymnasium for students in grades Prek through 6. Grades 1 through 6 may not wear shorts. Children may wear jeans. Sneakers and gloves are needed for running and tug-of-war activities. Events will begin after home room period and end at 2:30pm

Upper Division students will gather after homeroom and proceed to Flushing Meadows Park for a fun filled day of organized sports, friendly competition and community building activities sponsored by Student Council. Permission slips were distributed in homeroom and need to be returned promptly in order for students to participate.

Ambassadors Exchange Program To China

Five Garden School students have been selected as the first group to participate in the Ambassadors Exchange Program to China leaving NYC June 10, 2009. The group will visit schools in Suzhou, Nanjing and Zhengzhou .

Students Jon Cortez '12, Harry Cooperman '12, Ian Amann-Rao '12, Joey Dinas '10, and Mark Scotti '10 along with teachers, Sarah Smith (Social Studies), Marcia Elkind (History and English) and James Pigman (English) will make the trip. Garden Alumnae, Laima Efremenkova '05 and Amanda Kroll '05 along with one parent will round out the group.

Ms. Yuping Yu, last year's China Exchange Teacher, is coordinating the visit from China. She is arranging for students to stay with host families and to make presentations in the host schools. We await a return visit from Chinese students in 2010.

Dr. Marotta feels that this program affords Garden School students a wonderful, unique opportunity to enhance their education and learn way beyond the classroom. It truly makes our students "citizens of the world."



GARDEN SCHOOL SUMMER PROGRAM 2009



GET IN ON THE FUN!!

Upper Division Highlights

Eighth Grade Rocket Kids Rock the House!

A series of rockets looking suspiciously like two-liter soda bottles spewing compressed air and water whizzed toward space from the Garden School field. Students cheered from the launch pads, followed by a clamor of "Me next!" from younger students as eighth graders led them through the rudiments of jet propulsion. The launch was a culmination of a three-week project designed and coordinated by Mr. Hale of the science department, supported by Mrs. Massand in English, Ms. Smith in History, Mr. Heinemann in Music and Mr. Chung in Math. In this multidisciplinary project, students studied the principles of rocketry in science and built simple working rockets propelled by water and air pressure. In English, they read *October Sky*, a memoir about a NASA engineer's boyhood passion for rocketry as a poor coal miner's son in West Virginia, while learning about Appalachian culture in Area Studies. One of their math classes examined principles of rocketry, and several music classes were devoted to Appalachian music and instruments. The main focus, though, was preparing teaching units for grades PK-3 to teach and illustrate what the eighth graders had learned in their own classes. Students prepared lectures, Powerpoint presentations, charts and games for their young colleagues, ending with a rocket building session with pairs of older and younger learners. Groups then stormed the field for the launch, with all the enthusiasm of a Cape Canaveral event. One of the rockets even cleared the fence, bringing oohs and

ahhs from the third graders, and was retrieved by a pedestrian. During the break-down session at the end of the day, eighth graders discussed the project and analyzed the success of the various strategies they had employed. "We learned it better because we taught someone else," said Justin Trifan. "I loved working with the kids," offered Corina Patterson. The group concurred that partnering with younger students for learning is something they would like to pursue in other units, Ms. Macy of the second grade commented that her students loved the attention of older students and would welcome further collaboration. It was a wonderful illustration of how the pursuit of knowledge is not only cross-discipline but cross-grade as well, and that knowledge is enhanced by sharing it with others.

*Don't forget to ask about
Our
Summer Teen Travel Program
With
Mrs. Ambarsom*

Garden School Dates to Remember

- Sat. April 25—Open House—Summer Program 2-4pm
(Demo classes by TADA, Firstshot Basketball & Super Soccer Stars)
- Mon. April 27—College Fair at UNIS
- Mon.—Wed. April 27-29—Grade 5 & 6 to Washington DC
- Thurs., April 30—K to Grade 2 trip to Queens Botanical Gardens
- Fri., May 1—Field Day
- Mon., May 4 to Mon., May 11—Advanced Placement Exams
- Wed., May 6—Music Recital @ 4pm
- Wed., May 6—Grade 9 trip to Morgan Library
- Thurs., May 7—Lower Division "Planting Day"
- Fri., May 8—Physics Trip to Great Adventure
- Tues., May 12—PTA Walk-a-thon