



Teachers & Staff

3-6 Teachers

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 Joey Valichnac
 Kelly Sullivan
 Nicole Buckles

6-9 Teacher

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Music

Eithne Stover

Art

Victoria Hanyzewski

After Care

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WMMS
 Golf Tournament
 will be April 25. Great
 time to play or help
 make it happen!

Building a Brighter Future

February 2009

**Thanks to All
 for making the Pre-Spring Fling
 a huge success!**

*Special thanks to Beth Alwin, Eithne Stover, Lucinda Sinclair,
 Sarah Nolan, Tarri Randall and Mike Mahoney for making it happen!*

Valentine's Party Makes Hearts Aglow

Hearts were flowing for weeks before the Valentine's party in the 3-6 year-old class. Children cut and colored hearts to send home and decorate the bulletin board in the classroom.

One of the highlights of the day was a surprise Valentine from each student created by Mike Mahoney, father of Kelsea Mahoney. Mike took each child's photo and created a personal-

ized card for their parents. Students were also able to add their own last-minute decoration.



Many thanks to all the parents who helped in the 3-6 class while Miss Jan was in Colorado:

Susan Vest
 Margaret Petty
 Lois Goode
 Lucinda Sinclair
 Ron & Jana Towne
 Sarah Nolan
 Mike Mahoney

Thanks to all the parents who brought in goodies for our Valentine's Celebration!

Teacher Enrichment

On February 21, the 3-6 class teachers learned about science, math, reading, language and behavior management as part of the Early Childhood Education Conference. The event in Clarksdale served as part of their required 12 hours-a-year of continuing education.

Grooving to the Beat

The 3-6 class has been enjoying a rich repertoire of songs, movements and instrument activities. They have had the chance to experiment with rhythm sticks, eggs, and resonator bells. There has been a special emphasis on improvisation as the children are encouraged to supply their own words and movements to accompany a particular song. Improvisation is an essential part of the creative process and the children really seem to enjoy it. We have been experimenting with songs in a variety of me-

ters and tonalities and from a variety of cultures. As always the emphasis is in putting the beat in our bodies, so there are many opportunities to rock, stomp, run, jump, hop, dance and whatever else we can think of, to the beat. In fact we never just sit and sing a song, we are always finding a way to express that song in our bodies. Leading music and movement specialists tell us that during the preschool years the child should come to an awareness of steady beat and be able to walk to that steady beat. All

of these activities help to encourage the acquisition of basic rhythmic competence, a wonderful foundation for your child's future music and movement endeavors.



Spring Break March 23 - 27

End-of-Year Celebration Time Change

Come celebrate the advance of the Kindergarten Class and the school year with fantastic music on Thursday, May 21st at 5:30 p.m. Children should wear the following: Girls wear white and usually dress up. Boys wear white. Khaki pants are ok. Now is the time to shop. More information will follow as the time nears. If you have any questions, please refer to a teacher.

Charter School Survey

Thank YOU for a fantastic return rate on the survey regarding the future direction of WMMS! Your input has been heard and will be presented to the board with additional research and a recommendation on whether WMMS should become a charter school. This school is a genuine partnership between the teachers, parents and board for the benefit of our children. One clear finding from the survey is that you value the teachers and how much they interact with your child. You also see the benefits of the Montessori Methods for your child. We welcome your ongoing input via the suggestion box or talking to us directly.

WMMS Golf Tournament

Rumors continue to circulate about the possibility that the terrific threesome of Danny Noonan, Ty Webb and Carl Spackler will be "in the house" for the 3rd Annual White Mountain Montessori Schools Charity Golf Tourney on Saturday, April 25th, at the Pinetop Country Club. However, it has been confirmed that Tiger Woods declined to attend after learning that Gary Hanyzewski would be playing. "He's a big hitter, I'm not ready for that caliber of play yet" referring to his recent knee surgery.

One thing for sure though, it will be lots of fun and the proceeds go to our favorite charity, the White Mountain Montessori School. We need volunteers and more sponsors for the event... contact Adam Nolan. Check online at www.whitemountainmontessori.org for more info and an entry form.



New Year, New Continent

North America and all its diversity is the focus of the 6-9 class' next continent studies. It will encompass geography, languages, animals and unique cultures including Native American tribes.

This unit covers many countries including Canada, the United States, Mexico, all of Central American countries, and the Caribbean.

North American Night will be

Thursday, April 30th

Plan to Celebrate! All are welcome to attend.



The Elementary Students revealed the continent of Asia in December.

Incentivized Camping Trip Planned

Students in the 6-9 class can earn their place in a two-day camping trip in May at Sharp Creek Campground near Christopher Creek.

“Students will need to earn this end of the year trip on an individual basis by turning in homework on time,

completing special assignments, and following the positive class rules,” said teacher Adam Nolan.

Planned activities for the group include swimming, fishing, hiking and, possibly, gem and mineral hunting.



MAKING Music

The elementary students have been busy exploring. In the beginning of the new year we experimented with the physics of music and built our own instruments using elastic bands, string, wood, water and glass. The children came up with some wonderful homemade instruments and learnt about the physics of sound along the way. We spent time talking about the instruments of the orchestra, exploring a real violin, clarinet and trombone in class and building lots of auditory associations by listening to many recordings in class of different instruments, including *Carnival of the Animals*, composed by Camille Saint-Saens. Ask your elementary student what instrument they are interested in learning how to play. I know they all have definite opinions by now!

In keeping with our North America study, our composer of the year this year is Aaron Copland. The students had

the opportunity to listen to excerpts of his repertoire and learn about his musical style. The orchestral piece *Appalachian Spring* quickly became a favorite. We have been dipping into the American folk song repertoire, expect to hear more of that in the near future! In keeping with the American theme we have listened to some music by Scott Joplin, George Gershwin, John Williams and jazz greats such as Ella Fitzgerald as well as the Native American music tradition. It is so exciting to have a chance to build the student's musical vocabulary, repertoire and listening experiences.





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We're on the Web!
whitemountainmontessori.org

2009-10 Registration Info

Registration packets for next
school year will be available
March 9. Any changes to be
made will be announced prior
to that date.

Odyssey of the Mind: A 6-9 Class Adventure

By Sarah Davies

"Quick! Tell me all the things you could do with a paper clip. You have one minute – GO!" Beyond the obvious answer (attaching papers), does your mind immediately go blank? Well, then you have obviously not been training for Odyssey of the Mind!

Odyssey of the Mind is an international educational program that teaches creative problem-solving and other very important life-skills to students from Kindergarten through college. Odyssey Coaches Amy Hanridge and Sarah Davies have brought this program to Mr. Nolan's Elementary Class for the first time this year. The three five-student teams have been hard at work since the fall.

The children are learning teamwork, cooperation, original thought, and a positive, "make it work" attitude. They are visibly gaining self-confidence as they explore brain-storming techniques in an atmosphere of respect where no answer is ever wrong or silly.

The Odyssey of the Mind program is composed of two parts:

- 1) The Long-Term Problem: A year-long project requiring each team to find a unique, creative solution to a scenario that they will present in the form of short plays complete with script, scenery, costumes and props. The work must be entirely their own without any outside assistance or ideas. This process is different from the usual adult-led class performance, and the children are taking great pride in the fact that they are making this work their way and without any adult help whatsoever.
- 2) The Spontaneous Problems: These are on the spot problems where pretty much anything goes. The teams are given a problem to figure out



The WMMS Odyssey of the Mind Team in Flagstaff.

together in just a few minutes. It might be verbal, like the paper clip example above, or "hands-on." For instance, they might be handed a few straws, two strips of tape, and a paper bag and then be given six minutes to create a structure that will support as many nails as possible suspended six inches above a table! The spontaneous problems are designed to encourage teamwork, creativity, quick-thinking, and that all-important "can-do" attitude.

Many of the elementary children traveled to Flagstaff in January to attend a Spontaneous Problem-Solving workshop. There they played games and practiced spontaneous problems with about eighty other children from Northern Arizona. They also learned a few new team-building games and great fun was had by all.

The culmination of the children's hard work and practice will be the Northern Arizona Regional Odyssey of the Mind tournament in Flagstaff on March 7th. Here they will compete against other teams their age who have worked on the same long-term problems. Scoring is mainly based on creativity and teamwork criteria rather than "right or wrong."

The highest scoring teams are

invited to the State tournament where success means the possibility of continuing on to "Worlds." There, Arizona teams will perform and compete with teams from all over the U.S. and the world.

Despite the competitive aspect, Odyssey competitions are friendly, happy celebrations of creativity and originality. Teams cheer for one another, as well as learn a lot and have a great time with other kids their age.

Mr. Nolan's class will be hosting an Odyssey of the Mind parent night on Tuesday, March 3rd where the children will present their long-term problems and demonstrate some spontaneous problem-solving also.

We invite any and all WMMS parents to join us so that you can see what it is all about!

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MORE INFORMATION:

A wonderful ten minute video:
<https://www.odysseyofthemind.com/shop/showitem.php?id=389>

International Odyssey of the Mind website:
<http://www.odysseyofthemind.com>

Arizona Odyssey of the Mind website:

<http://www.azodyssey.org/>