

MAP Newsletter



March 2011

Featured Upcoming MAP Event: Family Dance March 26, 6pm - 10pm, Fairfax Pavilion

The Family Dance is coming. DJ Darius is busy mashing up our favorite tunes from days gone by with the current favorites of our kids. Dress up, step out, bring the kids and a little something to eat (potluck with PTA providing the hot dogs). Come dance, play, eat and chill as we bridge the generations and mash it up. See you there!



choreographed dance performance of "These Boots Are Made For Walking" by a group of moms (and Ms. Emily!) in full Go Go attire had people shaking it for hours. Fun additions like the shadow screen for dancers and hula hoops added to the festive dancing. Wow can this group party!

There was a photo booth set up to record the fine looking people attending the event. Keep an eye out for an email directing you to those pictures.

The list of people that participated in creating this great event is much too long to list here. But a special thank you goes out to the MAP event coordinators, Grace DelValle, Terry Rivera, and Andrea Sumits, as well as Rick Meissner, for pulling together all this talent.

MAP Parents Party in Fairfax

"MAP Parent Party Best Yet!" says Mr. Tim. The annual parent party was a huge success with laughter, dancing, libations and revelry throughout the evening. Delicious food and drinks were plentiful and lasted well into the night. The creativity of this MAP community was certainly evident with the entertainment that was provided by some very talented parents. Several musical groups sang and played while the crowd listened, cheered and sang along to familiar and original songs. A raucous Russian folk dance and a well rehearsed and

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CLASS NEWS

In addition to enjoying some time off in December and just this last week, our kids and teachers have packed a lot in. Read about all the amazing things going on in MAP and at Manor school.

Ms. Rebecca's K/I Class

A large part of the success of MAP is due to the dedication and commitment of our parents. This issue I would like to thank Deb Read for doing Gardening classes every Friday (the prehistoric tools were made with Deb); Jennifer Simmons and Erinn Lance who hosted an informational parent evening about homeopathy and Traditional Chinese Medicine; Kris Vine who is making knitting needles with the kids and will then teach knitting on Tuesdays; Anna Simmons who is doing a whole lesson on fossils and the children will get to make a fossil replica; Mark Solomons, John Zech, Jim Vasquez, and Paul Vine for helping to build our classroom 'cave' for our Prehistoric Humans Study. Thank you to all the parents who I have not yet mentioned who help our students in many ways, everyday.

Mr. Tim's K/I Class

Time marches on. There are only about four months of school left!!!!

In December, the kids managed to do a great job performing Dickens' *Christmas Carol* and then a week later they performed the *Nutcracker*. We are now in the midst of studying Cro-Magnon humans, or as they have been affectionately called, Cavemen. We have a ten foot long by seven foot high cave filled with cave drawings located between my room and room 7. Some of the activities the kids have been involved in include sewing leather pouches and making clothes, learning how to make fire, making stone tools and learning about mammoths and saber toothed tigers. We will do this for a few more weeks and then begin our rain forest studies as well as get ready for our *Wizard of Oz* performance.



Ms. Emily's 2/3 Class

On studying the national parks:

“Room 5 has been studying National Parks. We have started reports. Each kid does an ABC book, a guide book, or a report. I’m studying Death Valley! It reaches temperatures over 130 degrees Fahrenheit. I think Death Valley is the coolest (and the hottest) National Park ever!” --Alexander

On the class play:

“In Room 5 we have been working on a play: “James and the Giant Peach”. Practice is a miracle. Watching everyone is amazing. Our star is Skylar LaRoche, actor of James Henry Trotter. Room 5 hopes you can come to the play in April!” --Maya & Nancy

On the pets:

“Our pets Lily and Lizzy have been doing good. We have been making houses for them. One time Lily was in Rat City (which is a house) and we were practicing our play (which you might hear about). All of a sudden, Tori screamed and said, “Lily!” I screamed like Tori and then I saw Lily. She was behind a chair that Ruby was sitting in. Ruby screamed. That was funny. I think the Rat City workers should work on that more.” --Anya

“The fish are doing great. Except sometimes people forget to feed them. They have not been getting sick. Speckle wants to talk to you. “The fish food is good but the algae is best.” Blacky says, “Happy Valentine’s Day folks. The algae is good but the fish food is better... Go Steelers!” --Liza

On reading, writing and arithmetic:

“In math we learned about arrays. An array is a row of dots that goes up and then goes to the side. I even had array homework. The array we did was rows of Xs. It was very, very fun. But the back was not fun but very, very hard.” --Brad

“Our class is doing word study which is a study that you use words with. You can do quizzes with them and you have to use a buddy to quiz each other. If you get all of your words right you will get something like a “Super!” or something like that.” --Diego

“In reading we are practicing EEKK! Sorry, but that stands for elbow to elbow, knee to knee when reading with a partner. Currently, we are also doing “Reading is Thinking”. That is something where you read a book and you pick a question and you write it down and you write the answer on the same piece of paper.”

--Kaden and Skylar

Do not forget to check out Room 5’s blog - “Adventures in Room 5”: <http://maproom5.blogspot.com/>

Ms. Erika's 2/3 Class

Room 6 is chugging right along. In December we worked hard at making scarves, hand-warmers, nice notes and care packages that were handed out at a local soup kitchen. Our kids felt great about helping others less fortunate than themselves, and the gifts were greatly appreciated. Who knows - maybe one day in San Rafael, you'll see someone wearing one of our fleece scarves!

In January we learned a lot about Dr. Martin Luther King, then wrote pieces responding to the question "Do you think his dream has come true?" For the most part, we believe it has. We see people being "judged not by the color of their skin, but by the content of their character." And to follow that up, we've just started working on a play called "Character Matters", with songs and scenes about important character traits we all can work on - honesty, kindness, forgiveness and taking responsibility for our actions. (More details to come about performance dates.) It should be a lot of fun!

Ms. Chris's 4/5 Class

by Maya Krause

Explorers--In the beginning of December, we chose explorers. Our assignment was to write a journal from the perspective of our explorer. We did most of the research at school and most of the project at home. About a week ago we walked around the classroom and looked at each other's journals. We wrote comments about them. A few kids made a map of the world so we could show where our explorer went. We also made a timeline of when our explorers traveled. Most of the explorers were exploring from 1500-1600, or the Age of Discovery. It was interesting to learn about the explorers and how they lived back then.

Astronomy--We had a short astronomy unit because most kids have already learned astronomy. First, we made a model of the planets out of home-made play-doh to see how big the planets were in comparison. Pluto was smaller than my pinkie! We also did a scale on paper to see how far apart the planets were. I noticed that the inner planets (Mercury, Venus, Earth and Mars) were closer together than Jupiter, Saturn, Uranus, Neptune and Pluto were. Then, Rachel, my mom, came in and showed us some pictures from the Hubble Telescope. They were fascinating! Lastly, we each thought of a question we had about space and answered it by putting it on a poster. There were some good questions! We had fun in our astronomy unit.

Colonists--We are learning about the colonists. We each are reading a historical fiction book like *The Sign of the Beaver and Weasel*. Ms. Chris is reading us *Blood on the River* about Jamestown, and we are playing a game (simulation) called Discovery. We are pretending we are colonists coming to the new world. We have just started so we are refreshing our map skills. We have also been learning about longitude and latitude by using Google Earth in the computer lab.

Ms. Nina's 4/5 Class

These 4/5th graders have been exploring in all sorts of way. We have been exploring the Age of Exploration. Each student has taken on an explorer and is creating a journal in their explorer's voice. They have also completed a coat of arms in honor of their explorer. This week we begin the first stage of explorer school, which ends in an explorer simulation around Manor School.

The class also explored space. We completed a scale model of the solar system, visited the Academy of Sciences to see the Planetarium show, and created travel brochures for intrepid explorers to the planets, sun, comets, and asteroids. We are now off and exploring chemistry and dealing with the physics of mass, volume, and density.

In writing, we've been exploring our own opinions, feelings, and thoughts with personal narrative. While our historical fiction reading groups and many historical fiction read alouds have kept us traveling through time through someone else's shoes.

Excerpts from the Big Bang poetry: "When it happened, it was not just warm, but about a trillion degrees hot. Days of whirlpools, of planets, and stars. Then it was over, everything in its place. Everything that is here. Now." -Sam Fassberg.

"That's how everything imaginable started. I look out at the stars. I imagine the heat, the lovely heat of being alive." -Ella Ledyard

We look forward to our next adventures!