



IMPORTANT DATES AND REMINDERS

- April 11-14, 2016
Boston Bikes Continues...
- Friday, April 15, 2016
Schoolwide Rollerskating Trip to Chez Vous
- April 18-22, 2016
Spring Break: NO SCHOOL
- Monday, April 25, 2016
Grades 1&2 to Farm School
- Tuesday, April 26, 2016
Grades 3 & 4 to Farm School

April 8, 2016

Volume 19, Issue 22

A Chosen Favorite, or Two, or Three...

Dear Mission Hill School Friends, Families, Students and Staff,

A couple of weeks ago all our students were invited to write a story that they thought we all would enjoy reading. Several students volunteered to be judges. Their task was to decide which one of the stories our school community should read. I asked our story judges what they thought made a great story for our school. They said a great story for us is funny, has details, has no violence, and includes a problem and solution.

With 28 stories submitted and 10 student judges, each story appealed to a different person. Even though the readers all liked different stories, there were few that every judge really enjoyed unanimously. We decided to recognize several favorites instead of just one this year. We also added a new category called Short Short Story.

Here is the beginning of each story selected by the judges.

The Weird King, by Dillon

“This is the story of a king that did not make good laws. For example, you weren’t allowed to make your horse pull your cart less than miles per hour...”

Mining Cole, by Dario

“Cole Wright, a 13 year old boy from Boston, was shocked from the news his mom just gave him. “What? Say that again?” A confused look crossed his face...”

Acorps Willis Medical Center, Anonymous

“On a warm Halloween night Elizabeth Sanders, Miracle Pennyfeather, and Rico Truman heard about this haunted hospital on Treasure Blvd. “Would you guys like to go?” Miracle asked...”

The Fish, by Lola

“The fish went swimming in the pond with the crocodile, and the crocodile ate it.”

Congratulations on a fine job done by our writers and judges!



KINDERGARTEN

Room 108

Mr. Billy is a best friend to all the boys and girls.

Mr. Billy is a best friend, all around the world.

Mr. Billy is a best friend to all the boys and girls.

Go ahead, go ahead, go ahead, go ahead and be a best friend!

The Best Friend song is one of the top 5 favorites for our class. It is right up there with *The Wheels on the Bus* and *The Goodbye Song*. Mr. Billy, our music teacher, wrote the song and sings it with us each Wednesday when he comes to room 108. As we sing the words, taking a turn to sing about each child, the child gets to dance their own dance in the middle of the circle. It is a super way to build community and positive feelings. This week we were able to perform the song with Mr. Billy at Friday Share! This week we also welcomed a new friend to our circle - welcome to Mission Hill School, Noah!

-Geraldyn & Donna

Room 106

Last week The Flying Birds class went to Chinatown. We were joined by Alisa, Liam's mom, and Jennifer, Lola's mom. It was an adventure. Our first stop was Gourmet Dumpling House. The staff looked a little scared as they saw a crew of 16 coming through their doors. They rallied to provide us with very delicious food. We ate rice, noodles, dumplings, and scallion pancakes. Children tried all most of the dishes and discovered they enjoyed new foods.

We moved on to explore Chinatown. Children had to find different items there. They looked for the Confucius statue, pagodas, lions, dragons, ginkgo leaves and more. We found the ginkgo leaves in a surprising location. My group found their shape carved in a garbage can!

With full bellies and a lot of learning happening, we headed to the Tadpole playground on The

Boston Common. The children had a full day, and they are very excited about our upcoming field trips. Next we will visit the Museum of Fine Arts to learn more about China.

-Kathy D'Andrea

Room 107

"Chinatown was AWESOME!"

Our trip to Chinatown was one of the most exciting this year. It was much anticipated and we were ecstatic to make the trek. For our scavenger hunt, we looked for evidence of things that were invented by the Chinese as well as special landmarks. As we walked the streets of Chinatown, several of our students were convinced that we were in China. In fact, one student told his family that he would be taking a plane in the morning.

While we tried to explain that it was just a different part of our city, it was clear why the Golden Seahorses would think so. We were surround-



Jack dances as the Otters sing with Billy.



Ava and Jeremy play in the bamboo.

ed by the culture and the people. We found calligraphy engraved in the sidewalks, hanging lanterns, dragons, lions and porcelain. When we visited the herbal store, we heard the workers speaking a different language. When we ate at the restaurant, we were greeted kindly and as we looked around the restaurant, we were in the minority. We saw people playing various Chinese games in the park by the gateway and on our way to find Confucius, Mary Beth found a bamboo patch that we ran through.

-Jada Brown, Jo-Ann Hawkesworth & Mary Beth Fields

Room 109

Our study of Ancient China culminated in a celebratory day in which we shared our Shadow Puppet play with the school community, during Friday Share, and then traveled to Chinatown for lunch. It was nice to connect those events together in one day. The children had gained confidence and skill in using their puppets in the manner in which

they had designed and envisioned. They were so focused on the puppets and their manipulation of them that they performed without hesitation on the stage for the school. It was a unique aspect of Ancient China to share and to think about: how an Ancient Art can be practiced and enjoyed today. It was so exciting to walk down the street in Chinatown and see the gate looming in front of us. Our lunch, in Chinatown, was enjoyed by everyone and most children tried many new things. They are already talking about what to do next for Friday Share and other places they'd like to visit.

-Deborah Freeman

Grades 1 & 2

Room 205

As we begin our world of work theme, students have been sharing what they might want to be when they grow up. Here are what the members of the Tiny City are thinking about:

- Adam: Police Officer
 - Beatrice: Artist
 - Cyrus: Singer
 - Eamon: Video-Game Maker
 - Emile: Game Maker
 - Geneva: Kid Doctor
 - Gimar: Teacher
 - Jayden: Police Officer
 - Jasmine: Teacher
 - Juel: Basketball player
 - Kaia: Farm Artist
 - Keith: Police Officer
 - Madison: Veterinarian
 - Milo: Artist
 - Sarah: Rock Star
 - Soley: Artist
 - Shonnie: Bus Driver
 - Thatcher: Game Tester
- Ashleigh L'Heureux*

Room 212

We have started our unit on food and cooking with a lively conversation about what foods we eat. We also made yogurt and chocolate sauce to eat with it.

In math, there has been a lot of



The Golden Seahorses explore Chinatown!



The DJ Room enjoying Bike Week, despite the cold weather!

focus on number of the day. Each math session starts with looking at how many days we have been in school –and breaking it apart into hundreds, tens, ones, making the number with coins and breaking it into various combinations. The goal of number of the day is review what we have learned already in terms of number sense. Read Alouds are coming alive with comments, connections and predictions. As you read with your child take a little time to talk about what the story reminds you of, and what has happened, and what do you think will happen next?

On Fridays we have started going out again to observe our schoolyard and writing in our journals. The children have started noticed some big changes and learned about some new and exciting plants and insects in our schoolyard. Take a walk with your child-what are you noticing?

-Suzanne Brown

Room 217

What do you want to be when you grow up? How long has it been since you were asked that question. It is a classic conversation starter for young kids and tells you so much

about them. We are starting to think about what we want to be. Nyla and Julia want to be fashion designers. Hiram, Gerson and Jaiden want to be basketball players. Jackson and Farrah want to be master chefs. Ashton wants to be a police officer. Alize wants to play soccer in Barbados. Cole wants to be a football player. Armani wants to be a vet. What did you used to want to be? What do you still want to be?

The next school wide theme is the World of Work. As with all themes, this can look so wildly different in each classroom at Mission Hill School. We are starting our theme by thinking about different jobs.

The world of work is full of possibilities.

-Kate Needham

Grades 3 & 4

Rooms 203

By the time you read this, Bike Week for The DJ Room will have come to a close. What a great week it was! We started on Monday with an in-class presentation by our Bike Week staff (who included Henry, Jeanne’s art intern in the fall!). We then headed outside and spent every day thereafter outside on bikes.

When I asked them how they enjoyed it, here is what they had to say:

“Completely awesome!” - Anna

“We managed to ride the bikes in the cold!” - Typrese

“I thought I was gonna fall because there was snow on the ground but I didn’t.” - Kimberly

“It was kinda cold outside but I still like riding.” - Marquell

“I though tit was gonna be boring but it was fun riding the bikes.” - Nevaeh

“I haven’t been riding my bike in a long time because it was winter. I never want this to end!” - Amari

But alas Amari, all good things must come to an end. Until next year, ride a bike, be safe and have fun out there!

-Jenerra Williams

Room 204

This week, as we begin our World of Work study, I asked Billy to have the Bee Squad listen to the song “Day O” by Harry Belafonte. I watched the puzzled look on students’ faces as some asked, “What is a Tally Man? “Why is he singing about bananas?” Some laughed at the words or sounds that the singer

made. This experience sparked a discussion about where our bananas come from and where are they grown. Who grows them and how do they get to us in America? We learned that bananas come from plants and are grown in tropical places, where it can be dangerous for workers who sometimes encounter spiders and snakes. We learned that banana farmers tend to the banana groves. A Tally Man is the one who counts the number of bananas that are harvested in a day. The Bee Squad will continue the World of Work study by looking at different jobs, what makes a successful business and the concept of supplies, demand, and consumers.

-Cleata, Danny, & Yesenia

Room 207

Bike Week at Mission Hill is an exciting event. The folks from Boston Bikes "Will teach a classroom-based safety workshop covering some biking basics like helmet safety, safety checking a bike, rules of the road, and overall bicycle safety. Students will be able to learn how to ride a bike, learn new bicycle skills, play games, go on rides and enjoy all the benefits of biking, like having fun and getting exercise.

In previous years bike week has been a big hit here at Mission Hill. Children with various levels of experience have reported having lots of fun and learning new things. Whether it was riding a bike for the first time or learning the ABC's (air, brakes and chain) of biking, kids would rave about their time with Boston Bikes. Some classes had their lessons this week. Room 207 is eagerly looking forward to having our opportunity to ride next week.

-Amina Michel-Lord & Amanda

McCarthy

Grades 5 & 6

Room 210

The Crispy Leaves worked on research projects for the Ancient China theme. They were allowed to choose what they wanted to learn about, and how they wanted to share what they learned. Students were encouraged to really be mindful about both choices; think about aspects of ancient Chinese culture that they were truly curious about. Additionally, they were to pay attention to their strengths and incorporate them into a presentation of some sort. Builders thought of how to show what they knew by using their hands. Artists decided to visually display their understanding. Dancers used movement to show their learning. There were lots of moving parts to this project but it was well worth the time.

-Nakia, Manny, & Elsa

Room 215

The FireFlies are at the beginning of a process that will end in a completed compare/contrast essay of two novels by Carl Hiaasen, *Scat* and *Skink*. We are on the few remaining chapters of *Skink*; the reading logs are filled; the reading partners have supported each other consistently. Getting the FireFlies to read regularly comes easier than getting them to write well. So, we've started, again, slowly with writing: we are getting acquainted with compare/contrast patterns, observing new and familiar things in the physical world around us to compare. Writing is expression by means of comparison: how often do we write to say how an idea or a feeling is like or unlike something the reader knows! So, Venn diagrams and double-sided

journal entries are everywhere in Room 215, and when we feel ready we will turn our gaze to comparing and contrasting things literary.

-Abdi & Carlos with the FireFlies

Grades 7 & 8

Room 213

Our Fifth Day schedule returned to the 7th/8th grades last week. After Friday Share, students attended classes in small, flexible groupings. Students each received a schedule with their classes and locations (second floor and downtown area). They needed to take care of biological needs during the five-minute passing period and make sure they arrived at the next class on time. They did great!

At the end of the day, feedback from kids was overwhelmingly positive. They appreciated being in smaller sized classes with different kids. They liked the mixing of 7th and 8th graders throughout



Lily and Ella share work at the Curriculum Breakfast.

the day. They liked moving more throughout the building, rather than just between two classrooms. And they were curious about the possibilities a schedule like this could offer.

Math, Geography, Workshop, and Writing are the current offerings. We'd love to have more classes to respond to student interest and need. Classes are short (45 minutes) and small (around 8 kids). Do you have a passion or skill and an hour available on Fridays? Would you like to spend a little time with some great kids? Please give us a call!

-Ann Ruggiero & Letta Neely

Room 214

I find teaching the World of Work: Struggle for Justice challenging. More than any other theme, I find that it forces me to challenge my belief that as a teacher, it's my job to teach students how to think, not what to think. We are examining the debate on whether or not the national minimum wage should be raised to \$15. I've already found myself, on a few occasions, having to bite my tongue because a student says something that I disagree with completely.

It's exciting because we are not studying about the past or something abstract but about real life situations that involve real people. It's a topic that relates to all of us and we've all had a lot to say. I have to keep in mind that for many 7th and 8th graders, it is the first time they've thought deeply about justice in this way. What role should the government and citizens play

in how wealth is distributed in our society? As we continue our study, I'll keep my focus on the questions not on providing answers.

-Reginald Toussaint

SCHOOLWIDE NEWS

New End-of-School-Year Dates!

Changes have been made (yet again) to the BPS Calendar.

PLEASE NOTE:

School will now **open** on Bunker Hill Day, June 17. June 23 and 24 are **early dismissal** days. Friday, June 24 is the new **last day of school**.

Sing It!

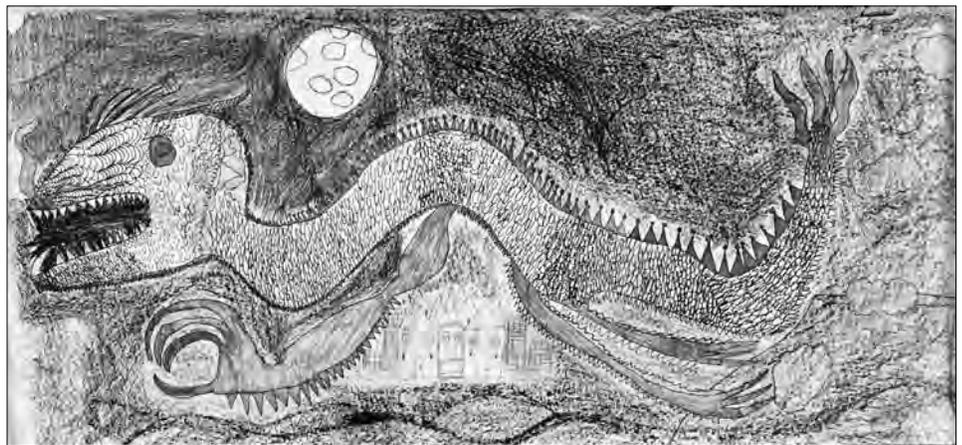
Sing It! is a community chorus program presented by Community Music Center of Boston and hosted by MHS on Thursday afternoons from 3:30-4:45. The chorus is open to any child in grades 3-6 who loves to sing and is motivated to participate.

It's not too late to join us and Sing It! For more information, please contact: Courtney Bruno, courtney.bruno@bc.edu or Jennifer Rathbun, at krathbun@cmcb.org. We offer

pro-rated tuition and financial aid is available.

Summer programs

Deadlines are quickly approaching for summer programs. Augus Scholars (grades 2-5) and TEEP (grade 6) have deadlines BEFORE the April vacation. Both programs are academically focused and also provide enrichment opportunities. Applications for both have already been sent home, if you are interested please contact Courtney or your child's teacher asap. Applications need to be returned to Courtney and are sent in in the order they are received. Each program requires a brief interview and accept students first come/first serve. A third free academic program, Project ALERTA (grades 3-5 for ELL and/or Latinos) is also first come/first serve and applications have gone out for that program as well. It's best to apply early, through Courtney, for these and many other programs. You can also check out Courtney's Corner on the MHS website for more info about summer programs and beyond.



Dragon Scroll, created by third and fourth graders in the Art Room.

Ayla Gavins, *Principal*
Deborah Meier, *Founder*
Tommy Chang, *Superintendent*

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