

Philomath Montessori School Newsletter

APRIL 2019



Springing into studying Japan

By Doni Manning-Cyrus

It is such a pleasure to see the joy with which most of the children return to school for the new term. Even if I'm not totally "feeling it" when I come back after a break, the kids snap me out of any residual funk and rally my enthusiasm! Then I'm ready to pick up where we left off and forge ahead.

Although we won't be learning about the U.S. southern states anymore. Now we are studying Japan. We have a pretty good selection of artifacts from Japan in the closet in our "Asia" box. As I excavated this very full bin of items from the continent of Asia, I had deep, deep regret that we hadn't been labeling artifacts as we received or procured them. Apparently, we had great confidence that we would never forget where this mask, puppet, or stone-carved statue came from. This confidence was, it turns out, misplaced. But I successfully identified quite a number of cultural objects that will be fun to share and work with.

The library books that Karen Remedios chooses for us are so important to bring the flavor and style of a country to life. After reading several books and showing the pictures, one sees the traditional architecture, garden design, clothing, foods, terms of endearment or respect, family roles, etc., again and again. I often wonder if, when shown a Japanese teahouse, a Mexican ramada, an Indonesian bamboo stilt house, or a Navajo hogan in the future, if they will recognize, perhaps, if not the specific culture from which it originates, maybe the continent.

As we learn about Japan, some of us will experience origami, Japanese calligraphy, and ikebana flower arranging. We will use chopsticks, move to traditional Japanese music, see pictures of traditional instruments, and learn about Shintoism, meditation, tea ceremonies, Japan's living treasures (elderly artists and craftspeople paid by the government to practice and pass along their talents), traditional and Western dress in society, the crush of big-city life, and the pastoral beauty



The class closed out its study of the U.S. South with a Mardi Gras celebration. From left are T.J., Theo, Tyler, Cassidy, and Greta.

of the countryside. We have already been introduced to the four main islands of the archipelago (along with the vocabulary of these land-forms) and that there are over 6,000 islands in total. We have been counting to 10 in Japanese and singing the beautiful "Sakura" about the famous cherry trees of Japan. We will learn some conversational phrases as we proceed. Pauline has agreed to tell us some true stories about her Japanese-American family and some of the customs they observe as well as some stories about her travels in Japan.

Towards the end of the school year, we will celebrate "Children's Day" or "Kodomo no Hi." Traditionally, a carp kite/windsock is hung for every member of the family. We have only one carp and I am very grateful to have it to hang. It will be so festive and meaningful! Mochi rice cakes filled with red bean jam are usually served

for this holiday and I will try to find some. Please let me know if you have seen such treats in a local shop or restaurant.

As we study Japan, you may wish to participate during your family time. You could visit a sushi or teriyaki restaurant. You could snack on seaweed or "nori." You could play Japanese music around the house. You could even visit the Japanese garden in Portland, reputed to be one of the finest outside Japan. We have been learning about the elements of a Japanese garden and what those elements symbolize. I think it would be so meaningful to be immersed in such a garden.

As we enjoy the warmer, if wetter, days of spring, Jessica and I are preparing for conferences. We truly look forward to connecting with you once again to swap stories with each other about your child both at home and at school.



Students enjoy a slice of King Cake during the Mardi Gras celebration. Clockwise from left are T.J., Hudson, Zedro, Swift, Kaia, Sophia, and Rose.



TOP LEFT: Laura works on the teen beads while Darwin watches.



LEFT: A group of students plays mancala. Clockwise from right are Cassidy, Cedar, Darby, Jay, Sophia, Hudson, and Isaac.

ABOVE: Greta stitches an ornament.

Thank You!

CLASSROOM CLEANING

January – **Jocelyn Eisenlohr** and **Kimberly Purdy**

February – **Skye Nielson** and **Brittini McGann**

March – **Amy and Kirby Phelps**

OPEN HOUSE HOSTS

Alalia Berry and **McGann family**

REPAIRS AND MAINTENANCE

Classroom prep and painting – **Rachel Houtman, Kai Foster, Tim Warren, Kirby Phelps, and Rachel Splan**

CLASSROOM HELP

Ironed African flags – **Jocelyn Eisenlohr**

Sanitizing – **Alicia Jones**

Maintaining tasting bottles – **Kai Foster**

Maintaining geography folders – **Shannon Zuschlag**

Building bread table – **Chris Russo** (it's gorgeous! I want one, too)

Bird feeding over winter break – **Houtman family**

Newsline

❖ **Parent-Teacher conferences** occur throughout the months of April and May. We highly recommend that you observe in the classroom prior to your conference. Signups for observations will continue to be posted in the hallway through April.

❖ Our **last parent meeting of the year** is scheduled for Thursday, May 9, from 6 to 7:30 p.m. Please note the change from the originally scheduled date.

❖ Our second **Children's Open House** will be on Thursday, May 2, from 5:30 to 7 p.m.

❖ There is **no school** in recognition of Memorial Day on Monday, May 27.

❖ The **End-of-the-Year Potluck** will be Saturday, June 1, from 5 to 7 p.m. in the schoolyard.

❖ The **last day of school** is Thursday, June 6, and is a half day for all students.

Scenes from the school



Group time is a chance for all sorts of activities, such as singing, reading, and doing yoga, as pictured here.



Mackay works on the North America puzzle map.



Sisters Linnea and Darwin pose outside in the school yard.



Isaac washes the soles and sides of his shoes.

What fantastic fundraisers!

Thanks to all who helped with the auction and benefit show

Online Auction

Though February seems like a long, long time ago, it's hard to forget the successful online auction! For the event's second year, **Amy Ward** and **Jocelyn Eisenlohr** organized and implemented a beautiful online auction that was a delight to peruse and participate in. We couldn't have done it without Amy and Jocelyn's positive attitudes and proficient follow-through. From providing clear instructions and organized spreadsheets to inputting all the pertinent information with eye-catching photos, this duo was always a step ahead!

Thank you very much to all the individuals who solicited donations this year: **Doni Manning-Cyrus**, **Karen Remedios**, **Les Oehler**, **Jocelyn Eisenlohr**, **Brittni McGann**, **Alalia Berry**, **Shannon Zuschlag**, and **Rachel and Leah Houtman**. A special thanks to our board members **Ed Durrenberger** and **Ruby Moon** for donating experiences/services. Together our school community assembled the perfect combination of items! **Karen Petersen** kept the public up to speed and intrigued by highlighting items on our Facebook page. **Posy Busby** handwrote and sent thank yous to the donors, and as the auction wrapped up, **Rebecca Veltri** efficiently delivered the auction loot to the winners. Together, their efforts brought in a whopping \$3,050.

Benefit Show

After another trip around the sun, the **Love of Learning Benefit Show** returned in early March, providing an exhilarating evening of connecting with friends and dance vibe music. We would like to express our universal gratitude to the entire community for their overwhelmingly positive support.

Our brave pioneers, **Shannon Zuschlag** and **Karen Petersen**, took on the task of being our first co-chairs to an event that we hope to continue for many years. They were a dynamic duo, divvying up tasks like seasoned pros. Shannon worked with the musicians and scheduling while Karen concentrated on promotion and advertising. Way to go ladies!

Karen Remedios took on contacting and following up with our sponsors. **IBEW Local 280**, through its community grant program, has been an extra special sponsor, making PhMS a priority in their giving—our appreciation is

overflowing! We were also inspired by the community support and dedication of these additional sponsors: **Barker Uerlings Insurance**, **AutoTech**, **The Corvallis Clinic**, **Pioneer Telephone Cooperative**, **Korvis Automation**, **Polk Avenue Pottery**, **E.D. Hughes Excavating**, and **Public Good PR**. Thank you!

Once again, it was indispensably valuable to have a seasoned pro with us from the start. **Kristen Arzner's** restaurant and event experience made her our go-to person for getting the logistics lined up. She was always available to answer the unrelenting list of questions about planning the event and took care of all our food and beverage needs with ease and patience.

Rachael Oehler created beautiful eye-catching posters and advertisements to spread the word throughout the larger community, never hesitating to make last-minute changes and adjustments. Many thanks to all the families that posted flyers around town to get the word out!

With anticipation brimming, the day of the event was finally upon us! **Shannon Zuschlag**, **Kai Henefin**, and **Jonathan Jensen** transformed the space into a stylish venue. Our signage, both inside and out, informed concert-goers of important information in a chic manner thanks to **Rachael Oehler's** clear designs. **Alalia Berry's** gorgeous centerpieces created a classy ambiance and desirable take-home items!

We are grateful to the many individuals who stepped up to be the smiling faces at the admission table: **Karen Remedios**, **Arun Natarajan**, **Rebecca Veltri**, **Rachel Splan**, and **Kevin Hulick**. They volunteered knowing that they would be taken away from the festivities in order to help out. Luckily, the location of the admission table allowed our volunteers to still be able to view the concert while monitoring the comings and goings of the guests. How wonderful!

We began the evening with a band new to many of us, **The Incompatibles**. Their high-energy danceable music featured an unforgettable violin and classy British accent—let's not let this group get away for future concerts! Following was **The Space Neighbors**, back in orbit and bringing us their intergalactic groove and lively energy. We are forever indebted to this trio that continues to perform at our fund-

raisers year after year, bringing their enthusiasm and a crowd!

Nick and Kristen Arzner and their able-bodied **Block 15 crew** plunged in during set-up and were an invisible force of efficiency putting together the bar and buffet. They created a delicious spread of food choices that was a crowd-pleasing success. During the event, they poured thirst-quenching beer and cider for the majority of the night, only taking a break toward the end of the evening to enjoy the music and try out their dance moves. We are awestruck by the generosity of **Block 15 Brewing Company** and **2 Towns Cider** for donating all of the food and beverages to benefit our school. Cheers!

An added bonus to the evening was the highly successful raffle organized by **Kimberly Purdy**. Kimberly's smiling face greeted our guest with friendliness and conversation as she shared her passion for the school. Her beautiful assistants, **Jocelyn Eisenlohr** and **Sirje Tamm**, donned fanciful décor and colorful aprons while staffing the raffle table throughout the night. The trio's sheer beauty and positive energy motivated concertgoers to purchase tickets throughout the evening.

A heartfelt thank you to **Doni Manning-Cyrus** for being our emcee for the evening. Her perfect mix of sincerity and wit got the important announcements of the evening across. Her two segments of standup comedy were a hilarious addition and highlight of the evening. I know for certain that we secured many attendees with the promise of this specific aspect of the evening and we all know Doni is not one to let us down. I'm hoping we can make this a tradition!

Sticking around to the very end, our clean-up crew, **Shannon and Kail Zuschlag**, **Candace and Chris Russo**, and **Jonathan Jensen**, were so fast and efficient that we were out the door and home before midnight. That brought us to the end of a very enjoyable and successful evening shared with friends and family and for that we, the staff, the board, and the children, are so very grateful. Mission accomplished!

We feel honored to have such a dedicated and generous school community. We thank you for continuing to make Philomath Montessori a priority, providing your suggestions and feedback, and being present in the lives of your children and our community. Our appreciation is overflowing!