HARMONY EDUCATION CENTER
NEWSLETTER
Harmony School • National School Reform Faculty • Rhino’s • Harmony-Corps
P.O. Box 1787, Bloomington, IN 47402
www.harmonyschool.org     (812) 334-8349
November 2010         Volume 28, Number 8

NEWS FROM THE OFFICE

HARMONY ARTS & CRAFTS FAIR
Saturday, November 13th
10-4 p.m. in the Harmony gym
Come support Harmony's artists and craftspeople!

COME TO THE OPEN HOUSE AND
BRING A FRIEND!!!

Harmony School - “Inspiring Each Student,
One Child at a Time”

WHEN: Tuesday, November 16th
6:00pm-8:00pm,
Community dinner and
music start at 6pm.

WHERE: Harmony School
909 E. 2nd St.

WHO: For current
families, friends
and prospective
families.

WHY: Learn about all of Harmony’s programs, your
child’s progression, and future opportunities offered
in the school years to come.

WHAT:
• Potluck Dinner *(sign-up sheet in the office)
• Art activities
• Geology exhibition
• Display of recent high school senior
projects
• Learn about our innovative college
application process, revealing how our
seniors have secured places at 38
leading colleges around the country over
the past three years.
• Graduates, teachers, parents and
current students will be on hand to talk
about their experiences at the school
and the exciting plans we have for the
semesters to come.

PLEASE JOIN US FOR THIS EXCITING EVENT!!

THANKSGIVING WEEK SCHEDULE
Parent-Teacher-Student Conferences will be held on
Monday November 22nd & Tuesday November 23rd,
and students will have NO SCHOOL all week.
Harmony (including the office) will be closed Wednesday
through Friday (Nov. 24th - 26th). Please contact your programs
to schedule a meeting time with your child’s teachers.

FOOD DRIVE FOR THE HUNGRY
As usual, we are holding a holiday food drive
here at Harmony. Please place your
donations of non-perishable items
in the box in the downstairs
hallway. Items most needed are:
canned meat, canned fruit, canned soups, canned
veggies, and canned beans. Donations will be
accepted until Friday, December 17th (the last day of
school before Winter Break).

TRICK OR TREAT FOR UNICEF
In spite of the state of the economy, our students,
dressed in their creative costumes collected over
$2964 for UNICEF during Halloween week.
Amongst other lessons, they learned how fortunate
they are, in comparison to most of the world’s
children.

PARENT INVOLVEMENT PROGRAM (PIP)
Remember to log your PIP hours outside the main
office or email harmonyoffice@harmonyschool.org
Please let us know where you did your hours.
Reminder: we expect you to contribute a minimum of
22.5 hours per year for single parents, or 45 hours for
two parents. If you haven’t yet filled out a PIP form, please stop by and fill one out or email Leslie at lcracraft@harmonyschool.org. We really appreciate and rely on your help! Please check in regularly with your PIP coordinator if you have time to spare, have questions, or need hours. The coordinators are: ECP – Megan Folley; 1st/2nd – Terri Loyal; 3rd/4th – Erin Garcia; 5th/6th – Jena Hanes; Middle – Michelle Poletti; High – Leslie Cracraft & Lorayna Sanders

GARDEN WORK DAY
Many thanks to the hard working parents, kids and staff who came to our work day on November 6th. We were blessed with a beautiful sunny, warm day and managed to finish many of the jobs on our list, both indoors and out.

2010 Holiday Follies
Friday, December 17th 6:30 p.m.
Don’t miss our annual holiday production with students of all ages singing, dancing, acting & more

HARMONY BUMPER STICKERS
Are you wondering what to get your Great-Aunt Helda for her Birthday? Got a spot next to your "Dora for President" bumper sticker? Want a birthday party favor that beats those stringy poppy things? Well, we’ve got the solution for you. Harmony Bumper stickers are a one size fits all gift for your car, your dog, and all of your closest friends and family. They make great companions for lonely stickers on the back of your car. They brighten room walls, bike frames and notebooks, but most of all they share your Harmony spirit with the world. Get your piece of Harmony School for just $1 at the office. You can talk to Leslie C. about price discounts for bulk purchases!

NEWS FROM THE PROGRAMS

EARLY CHILDHOOD PROGRAM
We began our lovely field trip out to Linda’s place as the sun rose on a beautiful fall day. The kids got busy immediately after we arrived, exploring and discussing life in the chicken coop with the chickens, then some of the kids had a wild, careening wagon ride. Best of all was the hayride through the woods, across the dam, under the colorful stand of quaking aspen, and past the pond back home. After lunch we retraced the hayride path on foot and some of us got to chase after a baying hound dog. We never found out what he was baying about. It was especially nice to share the trip with the K-4th grade class and get to know the kids in that class better.

All of the ECP kids love to listen to a good story and several of them have gotten excited about taking home our easy-reader books to read to their families. Some kids use picture cues to tell the story, some pay attention to the words, and others just memorize the story. All are great strategies on the path to being a great reader.

As usual, Halloween was an exciting time in the ECP with stories, songs and pretending to be things we’re not. Come to think of it, that describes much of life in the ECP year-round. The Halloween Parade was a bit intimidating for some of our kids with the big crowd watching, and only a few got the concept of “parading.” Most just ran from one end of the runway to the other. Since we went first, though, they got to relax and enjoy all the costumes worn by the rest of the school. Thanks to Shirin for bringing in the BHHS Spanish club to teach us about the Mexican holiday, Dia de los Muertos. The ECP kids loved the story and craft activities.

Happy Fall!!!

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

1st & 2nd Grade
The time keeps on ticking on and then backwards! As we are adjusting to the time change there are plenty of things changing in our classroom. The children are continuing to amaze us with the progress they are making on a daily basis. Their reading, writing, math and social skills are growing continually. We have finished making our masks and they look amazing. The children raised $423 for UNICEF on that chilly, windy October day. We decorated masks with Danielle, Mars’ mom, on November 1st, in honor of Day of the Dead. I believe we only had one child that tried to eat their candy skull. Thanks Danielle and all the others who helped! They were phenomenal and the kids had such a great time. We planted about 50 flower bulbs in a bed outside and are getting ready to learn how to sew during LB time. We are still singing the days away with Claudio and all of his wonderful songs. There is a lot to look forward to in the next six weeks.
3rd & 4th Grade

Lots of great things have been going on in and around our class in the last month. We are most proud of the work that happened the morning of our Halloween celebration. The kids spent time throughout the week before learning about UNICEF and the good work they do for children around the world. The kids created posters to help their fundraising efforts and then braved the cold to collect donations. It was so great to watch their confidence as folks asked them what they were doing at IU in the middle of the day. This activity, and the additional funds kids brought from their own piggy banks, warms our heart, provides important resources for children in need, and reminds us of just one reason why kids are so amazing.

In the classroom, we completed work on our memoirs. The kids chose a tiny moment from each of their lives to describe in a memoir. Each piece shared a stand-out moment from a bunny that wouldn’t behave to big falls and broken bones. The kids poured out their best writing and gave their readers incredible images from their experience. Feel free to check these stories out at the upcoming Open House.

There are tons of other things going on as well. The kids are learning about inventors and creating their own inventions for our Theme class. The Sister’s Grimm are deep into the trouble that comes with living in Ferryport Landing in our Read Aloud book. Soccer and Kickball are winding up and we will begin Dance and Badminton in the next week. Finally, the kids saved all of the teachers who were being attacked by parasitic aliens in math class. Thank goodness!!

K-4th Grade Class

We have been learning, creating, and enjoying each other’s company in our cozy little room. Book clubs, reading groups, math groups, and Invitations (similar to learning stations) are regular occurrences in the class, and we are getting started on our second theme of the year, Ancient Cultures. So far we have mostly been focusing on Ancient Greece, and even more specifically on Greek mythology. We have made a web of what we want to study, read books about ancient Greece, watched two documentaries, studied and drawn Greek vases, read and acted out Greek myths during Readers’ Theatre, AND we are reading Percy Jackson and the Lightning Thief for our read aloud book. We will also be exploring Ancient China, Rome, and Egypt. We plan on touring the ancient art collection at the IU Art Museum, putting on a Greek play, visiting the public library to do independent research, making a working volcano model, cooking a Greek meal, and learning about and creating some Olympic games. The students are really enjoying their Creation classes and Clubs, as well as lessons from visiting teachers, such as music with Claudio and poetry with Tom!

5th & 6th Grade

Our class has been rockin’ our socks off! Geologic rockin’ that is! We have studied and collected fossils in October during field trips to the Brookville Reservoir and the Falls of the Ohio, and engaged in a variety of fun activities. We will apply our learning into projects for a ‘moveable museum’ at our Open House on November 16th and at Barnes and Noble Booksellers on November 17th. Please save the dates!

We’ve continued to play the Civilization game focused on developing civilizations in the regions of the world throughout history. The activity will tie into geography, geology, and the Peace Museum as the year progresses. The student groups gain and lose resources, deal with climate change, and learn how human cultures develop through time.

In continuing with our theme of creating peace, we are reading aloud The Diary of a Young Girl by Anne Frank daily. This will translate into a spring visit to the Indiana Repertory Theater in Indianapolis to see the play The Diary of Anne Frank. Throughout this reading, we question issues of peace within the constraints of small spaces and situations.

Our Language Arts unit “Painting with Words” has taken us to the IU Art Museum to view and examine artwork using art and design elements, including texture, shape, line, color, and pattern/rhythm. Each student chose her/his own painting or sculpture, drew it, and filled out viewing sheets, analyzing the artwork with elements of art and design vocabulary. We will create free-verse and cinquain poems using these pieces of artwork as our starting points. Delicious, powerful and vivid words will fill our pages, which we will share during a poetry reading at the IU Art Museum on December 6th. Save this date, too!

Our Geology theme, Civilization game, Creation and Exploration classes have hopefully prepared us for creative projects and programming at our exhibitions and at the Holiday Follies. Perhaps a ‘rock’ show is in order!
Here we are, quickly approaching the holidays. This is a time that is full of many traditions for the Middle School. First of which, is the Independent Projects. We are currently wrapping up the presentations of our first round of projects and they are going smashingly.

Each student’s project has gone through many incarnations between choosing the topic and its final product. Every student belongs to an advisory group with an advisor to help them through the process. Each advisor does things a little different but, we are looking for notes taken, effort and research put in, rough draft and a final draft. Now that we are about done with the first round, students should have started to brainstorm topics and start to work on their second independent project which will be due before the end of the semester.

A newer tradition that we have typically done in the Spring Semester is the Open House. However, this year we are having the Open House on Tuesday evening November 16th from 6pm – 8pm. The evening will start off with a community dinner where we can all pitch-in some yummy food and mingle. Then all the classrooms will be open so that you can see what your children have been up to. We encourage you to bring friends to the Open House so they can experience all the great work your child is doing. We also encourage you to check out other programs that your child will be a part of in the future.

Another tradition is the Parent/Student/Teacher conferences. This year they will be on November 22nd and 23rd. We will have a sign up board in the hallway and encourage you to come up one morning and put your name in a slot. If you cannot make it up to the Middle School we would greatly appreciate it, if parents would call or e-mail a Middle School teacher to set up the appointment. If there are any conflicts and you will be unable to attend at the dates above, please call or see one of us to set up an alternate date. Each conference gives the students a chance to show off what they have been doing. It gives us the chance, as adults in their lives, to support them in their endeavors. In addition to celebrating their achievements the conference also gives us a chance to set goals, expectations, and share concerns. Students are required to attend.

We here in the Middle School wish you all a safe and happy Thanksgiving.

November is a busy month in the high school. Seniors are working hard to pull their projects together and finish their credits by December – while all the classes are reaching a crescendo as they head into their end-of-semester projects, which we look forward to sharing more about with many of you at next week’s Open House!

Sal-In Western Civ, for instance, we are in the midst of our unit on Ancient Rome and will be enjoying a banquet of authentic Roman recipes cooked by some of the students next Thursday, while the rest entertain us with the history of gladiators and charioteers. On a more serious note, students will start writing the big essay of the semester soon, when they will be comparing the culture of Ancient Rome with that of the US and seeking to establish whether similar seeds of self-destruction exist in society today.

In The American Century, students are learning about the History of Jazz and the Harlem Renaissance, before we move on to the Wall Street Crash and the events leading to Great Depression. These students will also be undertaking a big writing project, when they compare the causes of the Great Depression with those of the Great Recession and the effects of each on the society of the day.

Meanwhile, Art of the Story students will be editing their journals, choosing selections for publication in a book of their work that they will be putting together next month. As we move away from the perspective of youth in works such The Diary of Anne Frank and To Kill a Mockingbird; we will begin to examine Beauty and the Beast themes through The Hunchback of Notre Dame and The Elephant Man.

Alan-In all of our mathematics classes we have just finished up with our first round of exams since the last newsletter came out. We are going to have our second round of exams the week before Thanksgiving. It might seem soon since our last exam but I believe that evaluating our students more frequently but on less material will be more beneficial and help them retain more information than evaluating them less frequently on a wider variety of material and concepts.

In Algebra I we have moved on from learning about operations on the real numbers to solving linear equations. The next thing we will do is put our knowledge of solving equations to use by solving specific types of problems; these include distance problems and simple interest problems. From there we will start to write and solve our own equations from given word problems.
In Geometry we have moved on from the basic concepts of points, segments, lines, planes, and angles to more specific topics. Right now we are covering lines cut by transversals, parallel lines cut by transversals, and properties of the angles that are formed when lines are cut by a transversal. We will then move onto more properties of parallel and perpendicular lines.

In Advanced Geometry we have started our unit on mathematical proofs by learning about inductive reasoning, Venn diagrams, and conditional statements. We will continue by talking about the converse and the contrapositive. Then we will turn our attention to learning how to prove statements by paragraph proofs, two column proofs, and mathematical induction.

In Pre-Calculus we have started reviewing polynomials and transformations of a graph. In the near future we will cover end behavior, polynomial division, synthetic division, the rational roots theorem, finding roots of a polynomial, and the fundamental theorem of algebra.

Emily-The biochemists have finished measuring the toxic effects of household chemicals on seed germination, and have had some interesting discussions about various toxins. Just ask them about PCBs in bird embryos or how many cups of coffee would be lethal.

In Research Seminar, the young scientists are busy collecting data from their experiments on water fleas, the bacteria in our sink faucets, fake blood, genetic markers and high-pitched sounds.

In Alternative Energy, we visited the central heating plant at IU, where we got to stare into the fiery belly of a coal boiler. We tested our own power on an exercise bike that generated electricity to light up the classroom. After learning all about coal, students then researched various energy sources and have just finished teaching each other about passive solar, tidal, nuclear, fuel cell and hydroelectric energy.

The students in CPR are about to learn how to use Automatic External Defibrillators, the last step in their CPR certification process. They have already practiced a lot of rescue breathing and chest compressions on our alien-like mannequins and are becoming more confident in their ability to deal with a medical emergency.

This month, I am also teaching a fun Creation class out at Lake Griffy on Wilderness Survival with Caroline Hamilton, an IU graduate student from HPER and Kevin Glenn of the Wild Nature Project.

Paul-As we near Thanksgiving break, most of my classes are working hard to complete their projects before we hit Holiday Follies craziness. During first period, my Ethics of 9-11 class is working on their analytical and philosophical papers regarding 9-11, as well as their own personal statements of ethics. We just wrapped up our look at philosophical ethical systems, and now we turn to Christian, Jewish, and Muslim ethics, as well as the War on Terror.

My High School Pre-Algebra class is making good progress, and it’s been wonderful to see them understanding problems that they’ve struggled with for years. We recently began our unit on percents, and we explored both simple percents, like sales tax and tipping, as well as more complex percentage systems, like our country’s progressive income tax system. We’ll be investigating problems that involve a percent of a whole, as well as those that describe change; we’ll also look at the arithmetic of it, practical applications, and SAT style problems.

This semester is the first time I’ve taught Cultural Arts of East Africa, and it’s been a lot of fun for me. We have been working our way south down the continent, as well as chronologically through time. We just explored the founding myths of Ethiopia involving both the Biblical Queen of Sheba as well as the fabled Ark of the Covenant. We also talked about the monumental architecture, everything from the 520 ton stone obelisks of Aksum to the great rock carved churches of Lalibela. Now we turn to the introduction of Islam in Africa, particularly along the Swahili city states. I’m also happy to say that a friend of mine who is studying Swahili poetry at IU will be coming in soon to lead the poetic discussion.

Finally, Digital A/V Production class is making solid progress, both on their compositions as well as in their music reading skills. I am consistently impressed with the level of creativity that many of them show. They find some amazing sounds, and use them to build music that I find quite remarkable.

Tom-In Depth Psychology, we’ve compared motifs in the ancient Greek story of Psyche and Eros with Cinderella, Snow White and Rumpelstiltskin through a Jungian lens. Now students will be teaching each other through power point presentations what they’ve learned about pioneers of western psychological schools including Adler, Satir, Lazarus, Beck, Rogers, Perls, Reich, Glasser, Berne, Frankel, Laing and May.

I’m very proud of how well all my Greek & Latin Roots students fared on our fourth chapter test as we wound up medical and scientific term etymologies. Now we’re into more tasty and provocative subject matter with our chapter on liars and lying and will watch the hilarious movie, The Invention of Lying, as
In Literary Criticism, we’ve shifted from the challenge of love poetry to spiritual poetry with the ecstatic works of Rumi, Kabir and Mirabai. I’m very pleased with the first drafts of papers on contemporary poems and each student’s personal anthology is acquiring aesthetic weight now.

Ninth Grade American English students continue to improve their understanding of the admittedly confusing basics of language mechanics and grammar and they do very well with writing and vocabulary enhancement. Part of our focus is also on good note-taking and basic study skills, organization and appropriate high school class behavior. I love working with them and helping them make this often difficult and challenging academic and social transition.

Harmony School graduate, Evan Voss, and Harmony School parent, Jim Keplinger, are helping me with my Theatrical Magic Creation offering and we had a WONDER-FILLED first class. Hooray and many thanks!

THE SLABACH FAMILY, Compiled by Harmony Parent, Barbara McKinney

The Slabach Family consists of Amanda and Nathan and their son Ian. Ian will turn five on December 2 and is in his first year at Harmony, in ECP.

Amanda is a photographer focusing on wedding and portrait photography. She is the co-owner of LetsDoShotz photography. She was born in Florida and moved to Bloomfield when her father retired from the military.

Nathan is the customer care manager of a call center in Indianapolis, so he has a long commute every day. He was born in Lafayette and has a degree in political science from Purdue.

Nathan and Amanda met in Terre Haute. They moved to the Bloomington area when Nathan had a job offer in Bloomington, almost five years ago, when Ian was only a month old. (Ian was born at home, a water birth, which Amanda said “went great.”) Besides the job offer, they were attracted to the Bloomington area so Ian could have a chance to attend Harmony. With the economy, that job went away, but Nathan likes his new job in Indy. A year ago, they bought their first house, a home in Ellettsville, and so far they love being homeowners.

Amanda said all three of them love Harmony. They like the programs the school offers, the interactions between the students and the teachers and the liberties the students are offered as far as what they learn and when. Depending on Ian’s interests as he gets older, they hope to stay with the school through high school.

So far Amanda’s PIP job has been to volunteer with field trips. She said they hope to get more involved as their schedules permit.

Amanda said all three of them are big readers; Ian loves books, drawing pictures, and playing super hero and bad guys. Nathan loves books, music, and politics and plays the bass guitar. Ian also loves to play outside and using his imagination. When Ian grows up he wants to be an “animal finder.” She said all three of them also love art, music and movies, and called Harmony a good fit for her loving and eclectic family.

OTHER REPORTS

Hi everyone! I’m writing this after my incredible two week trip in gorgeous Hawaii. I traveled there to work with two different schools on the island of Oahu.

The first school was a private school where I did a 5 day Critical Friends New Coaches Seminar. The teachers in the training were understandably nervous about leaving their classrooms for five days for a training that they were told would help them improve communication with their colleagues and allow them to collaborate to help improve their work as educators as well as their student’s work. As the training progressed, a sense of safety and trust was built and the group began to see the possibilities for continued improvement school wide. By the end of the training, many could see why a school, even one as successful and respected as this school, should always strive to improve itself for the sake of its students.

I spent just a half day at the second school, simply introducing Critical Friends Groups to the teaching staff there. Although they were skeptical at first, I believe they left that evening enjoying the opportunities to have professional interactions with their colleagues. All in all, it was a successful trip professionally and I have to admit, not a bad place to spend a couple of free weekends! -Michele
What are we thankful for at Rhino’s? How about our amazing staff from the City of Bloomington Parks & Recreation that facilitate our Mural Arts, Screen Printing, Video, Radio, and Newspaper after school Programs?
How about the many local organizations such as the United Way, CARES, Monroe Tobacco Cessation and Prevention, Indiana Tobacco Prevention and Cessation, WFHB, CATS, and many other organizations who partner with and support Rhino’s?
How about the FANTASTIC Harmony Office Staff (Leslie, Megan, and Leslie) who put up with Brad and assist our operation?
How about Lee and Barb and Scott and Libby and Roc that also put up with Brad and keep us running in the right direction?
How about the parents, and volunteers, and Advisory Board members, and others who keep us going too?
Or how about the HUNDREDS of local teens who make Rhino’s a unique and innovative place for young people to be themselves in a safe, alcohol, tobacco, and other drug free environment?
Yeah - that about covers it. Happy Thanksgiving!

Brad Wilhelm

We would like to thank all the grandparents who attended the Harmony School Halloween costume parade. We hope you enjoyed the key lime, pumpkin, and peanut butter pies. Please remember to try to get your contributions to the Grandparents Day Scholarship Fund into Harmony before Thanksgiving.
We still have a few NAP credits left. Donors who contribute $100 or more receive credits equal to half their contributions as money they don’t have to pay in state income taxes plus the usual deduction from their federal taxes if they itemize. Tax credits make your contribution go further. For example, you could donate $250 out-of-pocket or you could donate $1,000 with NAP credits. With NAP credits, you wouldn’t have to pay $500 in Indiana state taxes and you would still get 25% or $250 off your federal taxes if you are in that tax bracket and you itemize. Your out-of-pocket expenses are the same the same for both contributions, but Harmony/Rhino’s gets $250 without NAP credits and $1,000 with NAP credits.
Be on the lookout for our annual Harmony holiday fundraising letter. It will be mailed the week after Thanksgiving in plenty of time to get your contributions in before the end of the tax year. Also, we are thinking about publishing a 2011 calendar with pictures from Harmony School and Rhino’s Youth Media Center through the years. If you have any good pictures, please share them with Scott at hutchinson@harmonyschool.org.

We held the five-day orientation in Indianapolis for the 12 Harmony-Corps Student Engagement Project members who work in Indianapolis to help increase the graduation rate of the Indianapolis students. We thank the Indianapolis Metropolitan Charter High School, George Washington Community School, and the Peace Learning Center for the use of their facilities. The Peace Learning Center’s training was very valuable and open to others who might wish to become “peace coaches.”

For information regarding other events held at Harmony please contact the office at 812-334-8349.

Bloomington Winter Farmers Market opening December 4!

Saturdays, 9:00 a.m. to noon
December 4, 2010 to March 29, 2011
(closed Dec 25 and Jan 1)
Harmony School Gym

This is a great opportunity to buy directly from local growers during the winter months. Our cozy indoor market features local products, live music, chef demonstrations, and a wonderful community. Join us for breakfast and buy local produce, meats, baked goods, dairy, and more!

Relieve Your Stress Through Meditation!
You are invited to join our meditation sessions at Harmony School! Michele Mattoon is leading a non-sectarian meditation group every other Monday evening from 6:30-7:45. This group welcomes people new to meditation and is a good support for those who are more experienced. The session is free, but donations are accepted. If you are interested, please email Michele at michele@nsrfharmony.org or call 336-2851.