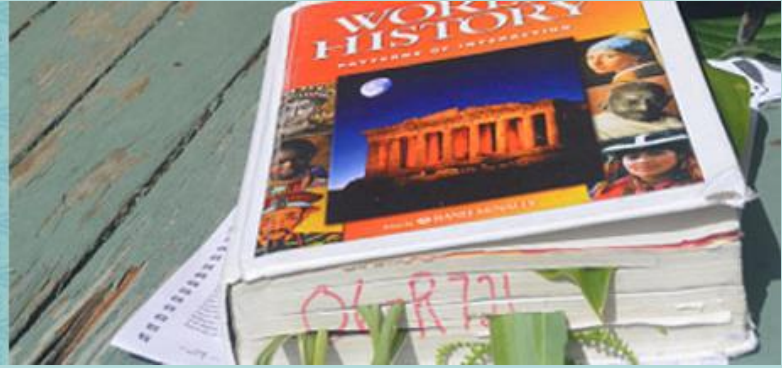


Classroom Newsletter

CAREN & STEVE

Adolescent | 2014-15



Painting the New Barn Classroom Floor by Wave Thomas

Before we started painting, we had a lesson in radial design symmetry. Then we wrote our names in an artistic design on paper and followed a technique to make it appear radial. Next we copied our design onto a big piece of paper that was the size of the squares we would mark out on the barn floor. We marked out the floor with surveyors tape in even, mathematical squares. Then we traced the design from our paper onto the floor, using transfer paper. Our final step was in art class, where we chose a color scheme and spent three hours painting our names in radial design on the new floor. The process wasn't easy but of course we had our lovely teachers there to help us. Because we can learn from everything we do, which is the great thing about this school, we learned the technique of painting and mixing colors. Some of us got paint all over our clothes and hands, but the classroom looks fabulous with all of its furnishings and the painted squares.



Hiking

By Jack Freedenberg and Cole Binzer

We took a trip to the Peoples State Forest in Barkhamsted to hike and to work on our map skills. We also had a side goal, which was to find a letterbox. At the trail head, we distributed compasses, maps and directions to the letterbox. From the first outlook, we could see the shimmering Farmington River, and I bet with how clear it was, some of the mountains we could see were in Massachusetts. The view was gorgeous! We continued on for five minutes and ate lunch at a second outlook, the site of the letter box. Supposedly the letter box was fifteen feet off the trail, between a big rock and a small rock that leaned against it, and, according to the directions, near a rock that looked like an arrow head and pointed toward the location of the letter box. There were three distinct arrow-shaped rocks. The first one we checked absolutely fit the description. It was huge and pointed straight at a group of rocks, but we found nothing. We checked the other two and found nothing. Then we noticed a relatively small rock, kind of rounded off at the top that could definitely pass as an arrow. I rushed to where it pointed, reached inside a hole, and pulled out a container. It was the letter box! I was very happy, but a small part of me knew that finding the box wasn't the only reason that I was happy. I also wanted to go lie down in the van and sleep the whole way back to school. I was exhausted!



“The environment must be rich in motives which lend interest to activity and invite the child to conduct his own experiences.” -Dr. Montessori

Micro Economy by Emma Stremper

A very important part of the adolescent program is our small business, the micro-economy. This part of the program enables us students to learn the value of the items we sell and how to price them, along with marketing and people skills. Our first sale was at the MSGH 50th anniversary garden party. We sold a selection of goods, such as canned

beans and tomatoes that we made with our chef-in-residence, Amanda. We also were successful in selling bees wax lip balm and honey that we extracted from our bee hives, and fresh vegetables from our garden. To three lucky families we sold a monthly subscription of eggs from the chickens that we tend on our farm. The sale was a big success and we made a lot of money. With that money we will pay the expenses we accumulated, and reinvest in our micro-economy to buy necessary supplies for future sales. We hope you will continue to support our business.



Kittens by Anna Foster and Therese Brady



We've just adopted eight-week-old kittens for our barn to reduce the mice population and to drink leftover goat's milk. At first we had trouble agreeing on names but we ended up with Billy and Arrow. When we first got them, they were a little skittish but now they're playful and friendly. At first we put them in a pen, but they soon figured out how to escape. Now they roam and race around the barn, playing tag, wrestling with each other, and climbing around on the hay bales. When we have free time, we like to visit them. We are trying to tame them and handle them a lot, so that they will remain friendly. We're hoping that they will still be good mousers. We enjoy having these kittens with us and love them to death.

Notes of Gratitude

The gorgeous kitchen in our new barn classroom is nearly complete, and we are very grateful to the families who have donated the supplies to get us cooking and eating. Thank you to the Kruczeks for the enormous mixing bowls, pots, cutlery and much more; to the Fosters for the attractive plates and glasses galore; to the Freedensbergs for the lovely tea cups, saucers and casserole dishes; to the Aronsons, Mieles & Erlikhs for the myriad cooking utensils, measuring cups, cutting boards, pot holders and much more. We very much appreciate your contributions!



Bees by Youssef Amer

In September, the Connecticut state bee inspector, Mark Creighton, came out to the farm to see if our honey bees were healthy and to check whether they had enough food for us to extract some honey. The first and third hives were very calm, but they didn't have enough honey to survive the winter so we started feeding them pollen patties and a saturated sugar solution. In the second hive, the bees were healthy and had plentiful honey supplies to overwinter. However, when the bee inspector checked the brood for mites, a parasite that feeds on bee larvae, the queen became furious. Since the queen sets the tone of the hive, she told the bees to attack us. Four people were stung that day, including the inspector. Our lunch break was really just us running from the angry bees while the beekeeper continued his work even after being stung multiple times.



Sheep Shearing by Scott Black

In late September, Pete Sepe from Sepe Farms in Newton came to shear our two Romney sheep, which also happen to be twin sisters. Snoopy is the friendly sheep, and Casper is a very shy sheep that follows her sister around. Romney sheep, the most abundant breed in New Zealand, are known for their high-quality wool and gentle dispositions. The tool that Pete used to shear was an electric razor. In order to shear the sheep, Pete had to push them down on their bottoms so they could not move around. Each sheep took about ten minutes to shear. At the end of the shearing, we marveled at how different the sheep looked without their wool. We also made dye from plants in many colors. We will dye the wool after it is washed and spun into yarn.



Move-In Day by Emily Kruczek

Move-in day was exciting for all of us. We moved from Caren's farm house to the newly renovated classroom connected to the barn. We brought all our stuff from the house to the classroom. It didn't seem like too much work. But I didn't really want to make two trips so I tried to carry it all in one journey, like almost everyone else. The classroom was really beautiful and almost completely finished. We had very fancy cubbies with our own personal little drawers and



slots for our laptops. Once everyone was finished putting away his or her school supplies, we were sent to carry other stuff from the house: assorted boxes of white boards, Sharpies, paper, books, etc. Some of it was pretty heavy so I ended up carrying the toaster. After nothing had been left behind, the classroom was ready to work in and everyone was happy.





The Week of the Bee Attacks by Kati Kruczek

You may think that this school is perfect, but we, like any school, have our little flaws. For example, we get stung by bees all the time! It's not just our own beloved honey bees that sting us, but mostly, it's the wild bees that are determined to make our lives miserable. At one point, Youssef stepped on a wasp's nest, and immediately afterward I felt a stinging pain in my ankle. I yelled, "Something bit me!" I bent down to rub my ankle when, yet again, a sting hit my finger. Suddenly I heard yet another squeak from my sister Emily. Madi started pointing and laughing hysterically but her hilarity was cut off by a cry of pain. We were all jumping up and down - Anna, Emma, Emily, Madi and I. We stopped and looked at one another. "I think I know what stung us," I said, as I pointed at a black-striped wasp on Emily's white t-shirt. The girls followed my finger and yelled. We ran away at the speed of light. Then, only days later, when we were harvesting Concord grapes to make jam, we upset another nest of wasps. Emily, Therese, and Caren all got stung! Everyone freaked out and sped down the hill back to the classroom. We all thought that maybe this was the last day in which we would get stung. It wasn't. Soon after, when Cole and I were in bee suits working the honey bees, some angry ones swarmed. We ran away, not knowing that lots of bees were following us. I unzipped my suit and bees flew in. One stung me on the neck, and Caren tried to get them out of my hair. Some bees were also in her hair. She got stung.

Van Ride Madness! By Madi Thomas

Every morning we arrive at the MSGH main campus to hop on the van that goes to the middle school in New Hartford. I sit in the back with Wave, Kati and Emily, while Scott, Youssef and Emma sit in the middle. The front is for Cole, Anna and Jack, whom we pick up at the CVS in Avon. Inside the van is chaos! Everyone is laughing and talking about random subjects. Scott tells his puns that aren't really funny and Kati jokingly lies about jumping out of planes. Cole usually stretches across the seats, his dirty shoes marking up the ceiling. The van rides up and down the twisted roads, with Ms. Risa driving quietly and all of us riding joyfully to the farm.



Daily Moments





