



# Tuckahoe Montessori School

Monthly Newsletter

February 2013

## This Month

[Primary Soccer](#)

[2013-14 Contracts](#)

[Calendar](#)

[January Discoveries](#)

[Continent Day Information](#)

[Reptiles Alive!](#)

[Parent-Teacher Appreciation Party](#)

[Special Dates](#)

[The Embroidery of Emily Paige](#)

[Summer Camp 2013](#)

[From the Toddler Classroom](#)

[From the Primary Classroom](#)

[From the Elementary Classroom](#)

[Art at TMS](#)

[Spanish at TMS](#)

[Chinese at TMS](#)

Hello TMS Parents!



In light of new security policies of Westminster Presbyterian Church, parents and other guests visiting the school will now be required to **sign in and out each time they enter and exit the building**. While we are aware that this adds an additional step when many of you are pressed for time, the sign-in process is essential to assuring the continued security of the building.

The sign-in sheet can be found at the door of the church office which parents pass as they enter the building from Antrim Avenue (see above).

## Very Important:

- The door code is **7268#**.
- Please make sure the door closes behind you.
- This security measure will require that all visitors use the door code or be buzzed in **individually**. If someone is directly behind you that you don't recognize as a TMS parent, point out the buzzer and let them know that someone from the office will greet them after they press it.
- Finally, to simplify arrivals and departures, you are asked to **ONLY use the Antrim Ave. entrance** that is outfitted with the buzzer.

Thank you all so much for your understanding as we shift to the new procedures.

-- Ms. Amanda

**Parent-Teacher Appreciation Party: March 21st from 6-8 p.m.**

We've begun planning our parent-teacher appreciation party! For parents interested in being involved, the planning committee is forming and we are also seeking a family to host. If you would like to be a part of this highlight on the TMS calendar, please contact Ms. Amanda.

Remember, start lining up your babysitters for this fun parents-only event on March 21st from 6-8 p.m.

## Quick Links

[School Homepage](#)

[School Video Page](#)  
(password: soundbox)

[Parent Portal](#)  
(password: pinktower)

[Calendar](#)

[Scholastic Ordering](#)

## School Delays and Closings

TMS announces weather related school delays and closings on

WRIC [Channel 8](#).

## Dressing for the Season



We will be outside so please dress your children appropriately and label gloves and hats with their names.

## February Birthdays

### Toddler:

**2/4 Corin Birthday!**  
**2/21 Georgia's Birthday!**

### Primary:

**2/2 Mariel's Birthday!**  
**2/12 Huck's Birthday!**  
**2/13 Chloe's Birthday!**  
**2/13 Mason's Birthday!**

## Volunteer Opportunity



We need parent volunteers to help the Primary students prepare their Valentine's Day bags. Interested parents can join the effort on Feb.

5th from 9 - 11.

## The Return of Soccer!



Next week, Primary families should look out for spring soccer sign-up information.

Soccer Shots will once again be running our program which is always a hit with the students.

## 2013-14 Contracts

All contracts and deposits for the coming school year are now due. You are invited to talk with Amanda and your child's teacher about any questions you may have pertaining to next year.

## Calendar

Please Note: The [online version of the TMS Calendar](#) contains all updated scheduling information.

If you are interested in helping plan the parent-teacher party, please join us for a meeting on Monday, Feb. 11th at 8:40am.

## Special Dates This Semester: Conferences, Break, and Family Events

Here is an overview of the next few months of events that may require special planning: conferences, Spring Break, and Family Events where a parent or caregiver is asked to attend.

Friday, February 8

Elementary Conferences

Students will be attending The Magic Flute, and participating in their normal afternoon activities during conferences.

Monday, February 18

Presidents Day

School is closed.

Friday, March 15

Staff Development Day

School is closed.

Friday, March 29

12:00pm

School Closes Early Noon

Monday, April 1- Friday, April 5

Spring Break

Tuesday, April 23

11:30am

School-wide Picnic for students and families

Afternoon & Elementary classes will resume following picnic.

Monday, April 29

Parent Teacher Conferences: No Classes for students

Friday, May 10, 2013

End-of-Year Family Field Trip

No classes

Friday, May 24, 2013

11:00am

School Closing Ceremony: All Classes

## Celebrating Our Staff: The Embroidery of Emily Paige



Phoenix III, by Emily Paige

Emily Paige, an assistant teacher in Ms. April's Primary classroom, is an accomplished artist whose thread work is featured in the January/February 2013 edition of Embroidery Magazine. In the article, Emily offers insight into her inspirations and her process, particularly the one year of work required for *Phoenix*, a photorealistic rendering of the local boutique.

Congratulations, Ms. Emily, on the feature, and best of luck as you continue to create such extraordinary art!

## Summer Camp

## January Discoveries



## Continent Day Information

**Africa:** Shigley, Lenczowski, Daughtrey, Clarke, Cimino, & Waite

**South America:** Hottinger, Gallagher, Paris, Porter, Whitlow, Bove, & Bazianos

**Australia:** Clark, Coffey, Downs, Hamilton, & Martin

Dates of future Continent Day planning meetings are listed in the TMS Handbook.

## Reptiles Alive! What a Day!



By now, you have received the email containing information on the TMS Summer Camp. Each summer, students get to enjoy a range of activities in an inspiring setting. This year's schedule is sure to delight!

Each morning, the students will enjoy some outside time. Then, they rotate

through three workshop stations. Following their workshops, they will have group and lunch and then head home.

The workshops will be week-long to allow for some intensive exploration of great topics including Spanish, Art/Handcrafts, Building/Sculpture, Science, Cooking, Cultural dance and Games/Yoga.

### Who?

Students ages 3 and up (potty-trained)

### When?

Week 1: May 29 - 31 (\$100.00 for this session)

Week 2: June 3 - 7

Week 3: June 10 - 14

**What time?** 9:00 am - 12:30 pm

**Cost?** \$165.00/ week

Early drop off will be available at 8:30 AM for \$10.00/ day.

**Lunch?** Students will have lunch at camp so parents will need to send water bottle and packed lunch daily.

Registration information will be distributed soon!

## From the Toddler Classroom



This month, the toddlers will be exploring Africa in many inspiring ways.

We will be cooking lots of kid-friendly Kenyan food. The student will also be counting in Swahili. It is always wonderful to see how the students enjoy learning a new language. There is a particularly good book for reference called [Moja Means One](#) that will give parents a chance to glimpse the counting. When it isn't in use in the classroom, *Moja Means One*, can be

found on the book display in the hallway.

We will be making a Valentine's Day treat as well and welcome you to come and share the treats with the children on the 12th at 11:15 for our two-day students and the 14th at 11:15 for our three-day students.

The students are actively engaging with each other during play time and their verbal skills are sky-rocketing. They have also developed their problem-solving skills to the point that they can now work out simple issues amongst themselves. Some of the statements and questions they use now include " I don't like that, not right now, will you help me, can you please share" and many more.

We are all very proud of the toddlers and how far they have come since September!

## From the Primary Classroom



We are continuing our study of Dinosaurs and the Solar System. So much to learn about both these very popular subjects!

The students were recently presented with a lesson on the concept of camouflage. They are exploring camouflage in the context of polar animals and then the application of their lesson continues with our discussions of the reptiles we



saw during the Reptiles Alive presentation.

The polar biome will continue to be a major topic of discussion and so you may hear *biome* working its way into your child's everyday speech. The polar region is the first in our extended discussion of four biomes that will also include the savanna, the rainforest, and the desert. With their biome work the students will be able to both manipulate a model or diorama of the biome as well as look at pictures.

Birds will also be a topic of upcoming lessons. We will talk about different varieties birds, their characteristics including the differences between males and females and the differences in their calls. We will also be making pinecone bird feeders. **Please send in any pinecones you may have.**

Afternoon students will be exploring Virginia symbols and Presidents. We will discuss the many Presidents that came from Virginia and students will have the chance to enjoy a work centered on the pets of the Presidents.

One of the highlights of this month's African studies is the performance by a group of African drummers.

### From the Elementary Classroom



In addition to all the students' work in mathematics, language, geography, and science, their independent research continues! So far four students have taken research trips to three different libraries: the Dumbarton branch of the Henrico Public Library, the West End branch of the Richmond public

library, and Boatwright Library at the University of Richmond (where, in addition to researching a topic in the Reference Room, two students got to try out the movable shelving system!).

The students are using framing questions to narrow their topics, and are filling their research books with such great information!

Students are enjoying their latest read-aloud, *The Hundred Dresses*, by Eleanor Estes.



*In this Newbery Honor Book, a young girl comes to terms with the effect that the teasing of her friends has had on a shy classmate. Though Maddie feels increasingly uncomfortable with the way the other girls - led by her best friend, Peggy - joke with Wanda, she doesn't have the courage to do anything about it. Then one day Wanda stops coming to school. Maddie can't shake a bad feeling about Wanda's absence, but she pushes it aside, preferring instead to think about the drawing contest, which she is sure Peggy will win.*

*On the day the winner is to be announced, the girls enter the class to see the walls covered in one hundred brilliantly colored drawings - each of a beautiful, unique dress. Here, at last, are Wanda's hundred dresses, but though she has won the contest, she will not be coming back to class to accept her medal. A letter has come from Wanda's father, saying that they are moving to the city, where having a different name is not so unusual and won't incur such cruel treatment. In the days that follow, Maddie and Peggy try to apologize to Wanda for what they've done, but they learn that deciding you want to make amends doesn't always mean that you can. For more than 50 years, Eleanor Estes' story of kindness, compassion, and standing up for what is right has resonated with young readers. The author captures the deeply felt moral dilemmas of childhood, without simplification, understanding that such personal standoffs can be equally poignant for the teased or the tormentor. Wispy, evocative, color sketches by Caldecott Medalist Louis Slobodkin echo the often wistful tone of this time-proven classic.*

-- excerpt from [Scholastic.com](http://Scholastic.com)



During the winter months, the elementary class works with CORE kids academy on Friday afternoons, developing their strength, balance, gymnastic and sport skills.

Lastly, this month they will be preparing for what is sure to become a wonderful tradition at TMS, the Elementary Grandparent's Tea.



## Art at TMS



Greetings from Art Class!

We are moving through some fantastic and fun lessons in Art. We just finished exploring Wayne Thibaud, pronounced "tee bow," an American painter who is famous for his paintings of sweets.

Elementary students painted with acrylics on canvas for the first time, paying attention to light and shadow.

Primary students created two works focusing on repetition, ice cream cones and gum ball machines.

This month, The Elementary class has begun their study of Edgar Degas, a French painter famous for his paintings of dancers. We are learning to see in shapes and gestures. Throughout the month, we will continue to explore Degas and other other Impressionists.

Primary classes are starting their explorations of Monet -- focusing on foreground, middle and background -- having fun understanding the differences in space.

## Spanish at TMS



¡Hola!

Early next week, parents will be able to visit the school's video page to see demonstrations of the songs the children have been learning and singing in Spanish class. This will give families a glimpse of the students' language study at TMS as well as providing those who are interested with a chance to sing along! A "Practice Spanish in the Home!" vocabulary sheet will be coming home the first week of February.

This month, at the Primary Level, we will be learning new vocabulary: "Parts of the Face and Body" and "Clothing." This vocabulary will also be integrated into the Toddler Classroom on a daily basis with Ms. Teresa. At the Elementary Level, we will review these same topics, as well as "Descriptive Words."

February will also bring new Spanish book! *De la Cabeza a los Pies* offers a great way to reinforce parts of the body.

As for songs, "The Body" and "Don Alfredo Baila" will be sung while reviewing parts of the body, and "El Burrito Enfermo" and "When I Wake Up" will be sung to review articles of clothing.

In the Elementary class, the children are about to begin their research on their chosen Spanish-speaking country. With the assistance of Ms. Ali and Ms. Amy, the elementary students will gather and organize information. Then they will work with me to translate their findings, and parents will assist on an art/activity portion. In March or April, they will present their research, ¡en español!

--Sra. Stefani

### Chinese in the TMS Elementary Program

Our beginning students continued to learn fruits and will start a new lesson (number six) about necessities of study.

The experienced students continued to learn about daily necessities and will start the new lesson about transportation.

February 10th is Chinese New Year, marking the beginning of The Year of Snake. In honor of the day, we'll read a story and have a small celebration.

-- Hui

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