



Beyond the Ordinary

Established 1998

October 1, 2009

SPECIAL NOTICE: Calendar Change

10/22/09

The Mountain School at Winhall has been asked to join the Southern Vermont Educators Symposium on 10/22 at Maple Street School. Hundreds of local educators will be attending. Mr. Houck, Ms. Spence, Ms. Tutsch, and Mr. Wilson are all presenters. As this is a great professional development opportunity, MSW staff will be attending. Therefore, **there will be no school on this day.** We appreciate your understanding—research shows that the more professional development teachers have, the better students do!

Picture Make-Up Day

REMINDER - Picture make-up day is this Friday, October 2nd. If you have any questions, please call the office or Pam Nelligan at 802-875-1890.

New Newsletter Format

MSW is looking to expand its format of the monthly print newsletter. In addition to regular submissions, The Mountain School hopes to add the following sections:

1. Board of Trustees Report
2. Parent Advisory Board Report and Minutes
3. Development Report
4. Mountain School Family News
5. MSW Alumni News
6. 8th Grade Student Spotlight
7. Student Voice

Please let Mr. Houck know if there is another section that you feel is being left out, and we can consider adding it. Thank you!

<u>Upcoming Events</u>	
10/2	5-8 Field Trip, Latchis Theatre Brattleboro 12-3 pm
10/7	Pizza Day
10/12	No School-Columbus Day
10/13	5-8 Field Trip, Long Trail 9-3
10/14	Pizza Day PAB Meeting 8:45 am
10/22	No School-Teacher PD Day
10/23	5-6 Field Trip-Starbase 9-3:30

Extended Care Program

This year MSW will be able to offer morning and afternoon care for a small fee. Students may arrive at the school at 8:00 a.m. (costs for mornings are only \$3/day) and/or stay after school until 4:30 p.m. (costs for afternoons are \$5/day). Students must have a permission form on file. Drop-off and pick-up take place in the Library. If you are interested, please contact the office.

Middle School Soccer Team Scores

Another Win!

Monday night the Wildcats scored their second win on the season (2-0), pulling off a 4-2 victory against Maple Street School. Devon Thiele picked up three goals, with Tanner Pawlak scoring another. MSW kicks off another match against Maple Street on 10/8 at home at 4:00 p.m.

NECAP Testing

During the month of October, all students grades 3-8 will participate in math and reading testing, and students in grades 5 and 8 will also be testing in writing. Teachers will make students and parents of the testing dates.

Daren M. Houck, Headmaster
Karli Spence, Assistant Head
Carol A. Stachelek, Office Manager

The Mountain School at Winhall

Beyond The Ordinary

A Word from the Headmaster

Our Greatest Challenge

By Daren M. Houck, M.Ed.

Let me begin by stating how proud I am of our founding. The show of commitment, drive, and independence is deserving—and demanding—of our respect. Who we are today all started with the dream and hard work of our founders, and I thank the committed community members that made their dream our reality.

One downside of our founding, however, is that MSW was started out of a *reaction*. Dependant upon who you talk to, public Winhall Elementary School closed and independent The Mountain School at Winhall opened because of poor teaching (and/or teachers), high tuition, or both. The founders looked for a new solution to an old problem.

Today, twelve years later, that “reaction” is not only still here, but thriving. And it is here where some of our most difficult work—perhaps *the* most difficult work of our existence—must take place. We must figure out how to take a school with no history of long-range or strategic planning, no intentional path to follow, and create a future that services well not only our community, but all of those families that chose to call The Mountain School its own. How do we honor this community and our families, hold true to our core values, and plan for a future of success and sustainability? That is our greatest challenge.

I feel that no one is as committed to the success of The Mountain School at Winhall as I am; my wife and I have poured thousands of hours and dollars into this school to make it successful. We have, I believe, been a part of a talented and committed team that has helped pull MSW out of the ordinary to offer a creative, unique academic program in a small community setting. One common statement from many stakeholders is that our children are happy...and that, in my opinion, is a definition of success. Because we exist for our children.

It is because of our children that we cannot let our future to happenstance. The current state of every institution—and person—is a direct result of the sum total of all previous decisions. I want to ensure that, for our children and our future, we plan now for the success of generations to come. And it is also the children that all of us—staff, parents, students and community members, must focus on and find a common vision and path to follow.

We thank you for participating in feedback to date. Over the coming weeks, please look for more opportunities to provide us your thoughts, and please participate in them. Every bit of shared information helps us find our direction. Some upcoming opportunities include a mission review, strategic planning work, program assessment and more. The first opportunity for input rests with nominating parent representatives to work on the school’s strategic plan. I ask parents to consider who would be a committed, thoughtful, and positive contributor to our long-range plan. The Board is looking to invite some parents to join them, along with staff members and community members, for upcoming planning sessions. You may nominate yourself or another parent, along with attributes or reasons that would make this parent a productive member of the committee, to Mr. Houck by October 16. We look forward to your partnership and working together for our children and our future!

Board of Trustees Report

Dear Mountain School Family,

It is a great pleasure for me to be involved with The Mountain School. I joined the Board a little over two years ago at the behest of my very dear friend, Robin Apps. I am a community member and a local businessperson but have no children of my own and have never been involved with a school other than attending one!

Over these two years I have learned so much about schools in general, and our school in particular. I have learned how blessed this very small community is to have a school of such

The Mountain School at Winhall

Beyond The Ordinary

high caliber and one that addresses the needs of all students and offers such a rich and creative program at all levels.

The changes that have occurred in these last two years are awesome: We have moved the school soundly in the direction of being a truly independent school that has attracted students from seven neighboring towns. We have created an endowment that has already earned us substantial interest and allows us to offer scholarships to students in need. We have an amazing Head of School and faculty and a very supportive Board of Trustees – all of which make for a great environment for learning and growing for our children.

It is an honor for me to serve the community in this way.

Debbie Peretz, Board Chair

PAB FOOTNOTES



Welcome back. Our first month as a board and as a school has been very successful, thank you to everyone for your support. I just wanted to let you know the Peru Fair Event went very well, and the PAB and other Mountain School Community Members raised over \$1200 for our children on that one day-wahoo! Our next fundraiser is on Columbus Day Weekend at Stratton Mountain in the village area. This is a two-day event, with shorter hours than the Peru Fair (I believe the time will be from 11a-4:30p with set-up and breakdown on both Saturday and Sunday). If you are available to help sell sand art, and possibly face-paint, please sign up to join us. I will be sending an email with the times we need volunteers. Our next PAB meeting will be on the second Wednesday of October (10/14) at 8:45am. All are welcome. Attached you will find the minutes from our September meeting. Thank you for your attention.

Amy Peckel

Development Report

A big thanks to Tim Apps and Dean Gianotti for another successful **golf tournament**. With donations still trickling in, MSW has raised over \$7,500. Thanks for all of your support!

This month The Mountain School will kick-off the **Annual Giving Campaign**. Our goal is set on \$20,000 again this year—an amount reached two of the last three years. It is extremely important that every family participates—remember, The Mountain School at Winhall must fundraise annually in order to balance our budget, and every dollar helps provide our children with the best education we can provide. We hope that families will continue to share extended family names and addresses to participate as well...it takes great commitment and participation to make a school successful.

Mountain School Family News

With so many families, so much goes on in our school community. If a parent volunteer would be willing to write monthly “updates” on our families—or if different families would be willing to write something about themselves and submit it—please let Mr. Houck know. Submissions must be received by 9:00 a.m. on the Wednesday before Newsletter Day (the first Thursday of the month). Let Mr. Houck know if you can help!

MSW Alumni News

We are looking for news on our alumni! If you have an alumna at home or know of one, let them know that we want to hear from them! MSW is looking for monthly submissions from different MSW alumni. Submissions must be received by 9:00 a.m. on the Wednesday before Newsletter Day (the first Thursday of the month).

The Mountain School at Winhall

Beyond The Ordinary

8th Grade Student Spotlight: Casey

Apps

Hello all new and returning families! My name is Casey Apps and I'm 13 in 8th grade. I want to take this opportunity to let you know a bit more about me, as each 8th grader will do in the coming weeks. I have been enrolled in The Mountain School since kindergarten. I love to learn; when I grow up I want to be a teacher at a school similar to, if not The Mountain School. I am also interested in sports such as soccer, lacrosse, horseback riding, basketball, tennis, skiing (telemark and downhill) and sailing. Some things that are very important to me are my family & friends, my grades, my guitar playing and my health. Some people describe me as calm, welcoming/caring, nice, fun and easy-going. One of my main focuses at the time being, besides school, is raising money for my friend Bridgette's kidney transplant by selling pop-top and button bracelets. Thanks for taking the time to get to know me better!

Student Voice: Students Helping Students!

Dear Families,

First of all we, Casey and Hannah, wanted to let everyone know that we have raised \$800 for our friend Bridgette's kidney transplant! Thank you all for your support. We get the best feeling when we see people wearing the pop-top and button bracelets!

We are asking that you PLEASE save your pop-tops for us to continue raising money for Bridgette and her family. Also if you have any old buttons lying around, we will gladly take them off your hands! If you do collect any pop-tops or buttons please send them to school with your child in a bag and give them to Casey or Hannah in the 8th grade room.

If you are interested in buying a bracelet, the pop-top bracelets are \$5 and the button bracelets are \$7. Thank you very much for your continuous support!

Sincerely,

Casey Apps & Hannah Gianotti

SCHOOL NEWS:

Flu Vaccine

The U.S. and Vermont Departments of Health are making the H1N1 vaccine available to the public in large quantities in stages. Stage 1 will be made available to children 6 months-24 years old. The Mountain School at Winhall is currently working with the Department to provide a free local vaccination clinic to our students. While the vaccine is free to all citizens at local clinics, the advantage of a school clinic is to vaccinate all students at the same time, hopefully decreasing the chances of the flu infecting our student body. More information will be provided as soon as it is forwarded to the school.

Fall Long Trail Work Day

MSW has adopted a portion of The Long Trail and is responsible for fall and spring cleanings. Parents are asked to join the middle school for our next trail workday on Tuesday October 13. Workers will leave MSW at 8:45 sharp. All trail workers need to bring work shoes, appropriate clothes (CHECK THE WEATHER!), a sack lunch and water, and shovels and hoes if possible. The school has several tools as well. Please let Mr. Houck know if you can go and/or drive by 10/2. Thank you!

Science NECAP Reports

Fifth Grade students that took the Science NECAP last Spring as Fourth Graders will receive scores reports today. See Ms. Tutsch or Mr. Houck if help is needed in reading or understanding the score report. Thank you.

CLASSROOM NEWS:

PK/K News

Our focus for September was family, classroom, and school. Some of our favorite read aloud books this month were Poinsettia and Her Family by Felicia Bond and The Relatives Came by Cynthia Rylant. Exploring and strengthening our sense of community is exciting in PreK/K. Students are noticing the bonds that connect one to another. I am grateful to our specialists for

The Mountain School at Winhall

Beyond The Ordinary

helping the children strengthen those bonds. While we were talking about families and family members through literature, for example, Maestra introduced Spanish words for mother, father, sister, brother, cat and dog. As we transition in October's themes of neighborhoods and maps, Miss Linda is having the children use their hands to build a small scale neighborhood with some recycled materials. It is also rewarding to see the children use math language (triangles, rectangles, circles, and squares) while constructing their house.

I'd like to thank the PreK/K parents for writing in the communication journals. I feel that it helps us to cooperatively educate the children. Thank you also to the parents who offered to come on Thursday's hike. Thank you!

1/2 News

What a wonderful community of learners we are. The class has quickly become voracious readers, creative authors, skillful mathematicians and observant scientists!

We have also worked hard on becoming a community of citizens who are respectful, helpful, and tolerant of others. Thank you for your support at home.

Our Monarchs finally arrived last Thursday. We put the 6 live caterpillars in the tank Friday morning and when we did a head count on Monday, we only found 2 viable caterpillars. We're not too sure what happened to the others. They may have made a quick get-away or perhaps they perished, but we are taking very good care of the caterpillars we have left and we get very excited when we see them munching on milkweed. Monarch caterpillars need a lot of fresh milkweed in order to survive. If you see any green plants and can send them in, please do so. They need fresh leaves every day and the supply here at school has been exhausted. Thank you!

5/6 News

We have launched into our study of the Long Trail! It is exciting to see students learn about America's oldest and original long distance hiking trail that is in our back yard! Next week we will be hiking the Long Trail by starting at the top of Stratton, where James P. Taylor originally had the idea to connect Vermont's mountains with a trail in 1910. The Green Mountain Club was born and 20 years later, after a lot of hard work, the trail was finished. Students will be learning about the science of matter through learning about trail gear, stoves, heat loss and other topics. They will learn about forest ecology and geology by exploring our own forests and mountains. They will be reading journals by people who have hiked the Long Trail and be writing their own poetry and accounts of their own experiences. Their writing will inspire songwriting, which will be connected to traveling musicians and instruments. They will be learning about the history of land use in Vermont along with contemporary issues that make us think about our relationship with the land and how we use the land around us. They will build off the idea of how we think about landscape through exploring Chinese scroll paintings. I am looking forward to learning along with the students in this integrated, hands-on thematic study! Please let me know if you have ideas of resources or would like to become involved. Thanks!

Visual Arts/ Arts Integration

Hello from the art studio! This year we have started off with a introductory unit on Aesthetics, called why art? We have been exploring questions about art: what is it, who makes it, why do we make it and a bunch of other questions. We will be revisiting these questions as we go through the year as a way to develop a greater understanding of our own work and that of other artists. Our first project is underway and kids are working on self-portraits of varying types.

The Mountain School at Winhall

Beyond The Ordinary

In this first trimester we will be focusing on aesthetics and our “basics”, the elements and principals of art. We do this every year to reinforce the building blocks of art. Later on in the year we will be applying these fundamentals in various interesting projects including independent projects for the middle school.

In arts integration we have begun developing our plans and will be beginning our projects soon. An exciting opportunity has come our way in the person of Tan Na, a teacher of English at Inner Mongolia University. Tan Na is here as a part of the Journey East Program at Leland & Grey High School. This is the same program that Mrs. Burnett and I traveled to China with last spring. We are still working out the details, but at this point it looks like Tan Na will be in residence two days a week, for the month of November. She will be working with the staff to bring her dual culture (Chinese and Mongolian) to students in all grades. We are excited and looking forward to this great opportunity.

Just a reminder: that art is on Mondays and Fridays this year. Please make sure your student is dressed appropriately for creative chaos! Because of the schedule there may be times that I will be asking students do some “ home work between Monday ad Friday. This applies mostly to Middle school students and usually will be writing, drawing and researching in their journals, or gathering materials they will need for class on Friday. Please feel free to get in touch if you have any questions regarding this or anything else.

Thanks To Abby Birch for helping out with the 5-6 class on Mondays. If any other parents are interested in assisting in the art studio – let me know. If you just want to come in and check out what are working on – you are always welcome. As always, the most important things you can do are to support and encourage your students in their art making.

Paul

Math Lab News

Greetings from the MSW Math Lab! All MSW mathematicians have been working extremely hard since the beginning of the year and our progress proves it! In second grade, we have been exploring sorting, patterning and number operations. We are working hard to master skills of telling time, counting money and are beginning to explore some higher level numeric operations. In fourth grade, we have been investigating perimeter, area, multiplication, division and problem solving. We are exploring many different ways to understand these concepts so we develop a stronger understanding. In sixth grade, things are going fantastic! We are adjusting to the new format of our class model and things seem to be going well! Currently, most of us are investigating our first unit: Data Interpretation. We may need to ask you some questions to collect data, your participation is appreciated! The MSW Algebra group is moving along well too! We just took our first quiz about Powers and Roots! If you need a refresher course in Algebra ask any MSW 8th grader in Algebra for a tutoring session- they are masters of solving for the unknown! As always, we welcome visitors, volunteers and fellow mathematicians! Please just let Ms. Spence know if you are interested in dropping by!

Library News

Hello from the library. This past month we have been a part of the French and Indian Wars, the art of Norman Rockwell, and the Baroque Era in music with Johann Sebastian Bach. Various cultures, buying local (The book 'Spuds' by Vermont author Karen Hesse), and mysteries by authors Peter Abraham and Tony Abbot have also been a part of our topics. We will be visiting a presentation by these two authors on Friday. I'm encouraging parents to come in and browse our collection and find something of interest to check out. Our library will be taking on a new look very soon. Very Exciting!! Please stop in and visit.

The Mountain School at Winhall

Beyond The Ordinary

Spanish News

Hola Families and students ~~ *familias y estudiantes!*

The year has really started! And I'm getting to know all of your lively, smart and expectant children. And enjoying them.

We've been singing, talking and dancing, and dusting off our Spanish from time unused. I hope your child(ren) is/are coming home with tales of searching for beads in a bucket of beans, ...as we learn our colors and a few other words, of the Cha Cha Cha ... song, of the Puerto Rican **Pollito ~ Chicken** Rap song in which lots of familiar, and a few new words hide in the rhythm, of cutting out shapes in different colors and sizes... of learning numbers in the thousands! *¡Ay caramba!* ...and of reaching into the Peruvian backpack to answer the question: *¿Qué está en la mochila?*

I know that many of you will be looking to learn alongside your children, and we adults tend to like to see or read what our children are learning and saying. To this end, I will be giving families access to my Fiesta Spanish website... soon. On it you and the students will find words to songs, enrichment activities and homework! More later... *Más tarde.... Y gracias por su paciencia.* ... and thanks for your patience.

Con cariño, warmly

Maestra aka Greenough Nowakoski

Flu Reminders!

This year's Flu season is expected to be the worst in decades. Families are asked to remember and abide by the following:

1. Wash your hands with warm soapy water for at least 20 seconds, and do it OFTEN. This is the most powerful tool against the flu—PREVENTION!
2. If soap and water is not available, hand gels (i.e. Purell) can be used. Please note: THESE ARE LESS EFFECTIVE THAN REGULAR HANDWASHING!

3. Any flu-like symptoms need to be addressed. Keep your child/self at home. Minimize contact with others. Wait 24 hours AFTER FEELING BETTER to return to school/work.
4. Contact your school/office if any member of your family has the Swine Flu. The school will make notify families of closures due to an outbreak.

Cups, Forks, and Other Dinnerware

In both a cost- and environmental-saving move, The Mountain School hopes to continue to be more responsible, and looks to you for help. MSW requests the following:

1. Please send in your own silverware with your child's lunches that can be taken to and from school daily. Plastic forks are used one time for about 5 minutes before being thrown in a landfill forever...not a good use of resources!
2. Please search tag sales, clearance racks, etc. for utensils to donate to the school. We hope to have a LARGE collection of forks (and some knives and spoons!) to use at gatherings. While washing forks and knives after an event is a chore, it is better than throwing away 100 forks every time we gather! Thanks for your help with helping us be more sustainable.

Box Tops For Education

Thank you to those families who have already sent in Box Tops. Please keep sending in your neatly clipped box tops and let's have a record year! Thank you for your support!

Tools For School

Please see the attached flyer for registration information to help raise funds for our school while you grocery shop at Price Chopper!

The Mountain School at Winhall

Beyond The Ordinary

Funding Factory

We still participate in the laser cartridge recycling program – so remember to bring in your empty cartridges. This is a great fundraising program for our school and good for the environment too!

COMMUNITY NEWS:

Coats From Slopes Coat Drive Ski Sale

Fundraiser

Coats from Slopes is a Vermont based non profit that distributes coats for those in need throughout Vermont.

Please bring any clean coat and or jacket to their Coat Drive Ski Sale fundraiser on October 8-12.

9am to 6pm Thursday through Sunday and 9am – 3pm on Monday are the hours.

This great event will be in Jamaica Vermont across from the Jamaica Community Church under the tent.

There will be new and used adult and children's ski equipment up to 75% off

Famous brands like Rossignol, Atomic, Salomon, Head and more will be available.

Great deals on socks, goggles, gloves and more!

Experts will be on hand for boot fitting and great technical advice .

Used ski boots start at \$39.00 and used skis with bindings start at \$89.00.

Each person donating a coat will receive \$ 10.00 off on any ski or ski boot purchase . This offer is limited one per each purchase from October 8-12 only.

Please tell all your friends to check their closets and help donate coats!

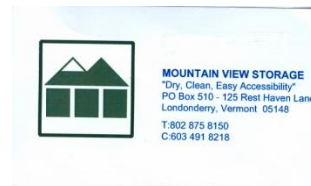
Northshire Hockey Association

Please see the attached flyer for registration information.

SVM Fusion Soccer

This is a spring soccer program. Please see the attached flyer for more information

If you have any information that you think our school community would be interested in, please submit to the office for inclusion in our newsletter!



Thank you to the Cyr family for their donation of a 10X10 storage space for our School!

Procedures for public participation at Board meetings:

Individuals wishing to address the Board must contact the Board Chair at least 3 days in advance of the Board meeting. The contact should include the subject of the presentation and the approximate time needed to speak. Board meetings are held on the first Thursday of each month.

The Mountain School Board of Trustees:

Debbie Peretz, Chair * Chuck Scranton, Vice Chair * Thom McMahon, Treasurer * C.J. King *Virginia Morgan *Ric Swenson * Betsy Wadsworth