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Upcoming Events

May 16	Afternoon with the Arts Oak Farm Arts Center, Green Drive Gallery Opens at 3:15 PM
May 16	Track vs. Canterbury & Blackhawk Christian @ Canterbury 5 PM
May 18	Infant and Toddler Classrooms Closed
May 25	Last Day of School

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

Headlines from Oak Farm Montessori School

Our mission is to provide a Montessori environment that inspires children to reach their potential through meaningful work.

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FROM JUDITH CUNNINGHAM, HEAD OF SCHOOL

Celebrate the Arts with Us

This Wednesday, May 16, from 3:15-4:30 PM, Oak Farm Montessori School will celebrate "An Afternoon with the Arts" at the Oak Farm Art Center on Green Drive. Students from Lower Elementary through Middle School will showcase their year of work in the visual arts and music to help you appreciate the importance the Arts hold in the life of your child.

The Arts teach many skills. Children learn how to reach into their creative side to make something without judging the outcome before it happens. They learn coordination and motor skills, making their hands reproduce either what their eyes see or their mind envisions. They learn how to take the initiative to start that project and the satisfaction of completing it. A practical benefit in today's world is that the process not only generates an appreciation for the Arts, but also helps to build a strong work ethic.

In our art classes, the students also learn the important skill of learning to objectively critique projects. They analyze their work and they learn how to look at all of its components. This teaches the important skill of analysis, which will come into

play for the rest of their lives. Art brings all of these cognitive skills into play for success in one's entire life.

In addition, the Arts enrich our culture and allow us to experience the world and different cultures within it. The Uganda project with the Upper Elementary students certainly created a unique appreciation of the Ugandan culture.

The Museum of Children's Art in Oakland lists these benefits associated with children learning art while they are young and the impact it has on their lives.

- Art stimulates both sides of the brain.
- Studies show that students, who make art, read better and get better grades in science and mathematics.
- Students learn by using their senses and art is ideal in this process.
- Students need a place to express themselves at school.
- Art encourages students to give more attention to the physical space that surround them.
- Art develops hand and eye coordination.

FROM JUDITH CUNNINGHAM, HEAD OF SCHOOL

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- Art stimulates perception.
- Art teaches them to think openly. It represents a culture of questioners more than a culture of responders.
- Art teaches that there is more than one solution for a problem.
- Art teaches students to think creatively to solve problems.
- Students can share and reflect on their work of art and learn something about the world they live in.
- When art is integrated with the other subjects in the curriculum, students commit more to the learning process.
- In the process of doing art, the child is exposed to different possibilities, to discover and to freedom, this way they avoid falling into the control and the predictability of the conventional education in the United States of today.
- Art nourishes the human soul. One feels good doing it.
- Art brings the cultural resources of the community into the class.
- Art involves parents and tutors in the school, inviting them to participate as volunteers in diverse activities.
- Art provides a common ground across racial stereotypes, barriers and prejudices.

Art is valuable all by itself and that is why it is such an integral part of the Oak Farm education process. Plus. . . it is fun!

See you at the Afternoon with the Arts!

Judith

IS IT WORK OR IS IT PLAY?

By Candy Slabaugh , Toddler Teacher

Have you ever observed infants and toddlers? It almost looks as if they are working rather than playing. Infants are fully involved and absorbed in what they are doing. We don't need to make up exercises for them. They learn and follow their instincts and trust their own judgments. Infants and toddlers accomplish mastery by endless repetition continuing the same activity over and over again; long after most adults may have lost interest. When an infant or toddler repeats an action many, many times he is not bored, rather he is thoroughly learning about that action, making it part of himself and his world. When he has learned to his own satisfaction he will move on to another new activity.

Children work through conflicts with objects, other children, and adults while playing.

Play provides infants and toddlers an outlet for their curiosity and information about their physical world. Children at any stage learn ways to deal with anxiety and social relationships. In the long run, play serves children's inner needs, hopes, and aspirations. The infant and toddlers' play is their work.

AFTERNOON WITH THE ARTS PROGRAM SCHEDULE

Open Gallery Times

3:15 to 3:30 for Upper Elementary

4:30 to 4:45 for Lower Elementary and Middle School

Schedule of Performances

3:15 to 3:25 – Upper Elementary African Drummers led by Omowale-Ketu Oladuwa

3:25 to 3:35 – Middle School African Drummers led by Omowale-Ketu Oladuwa

3:40 to 4:30 – Musical Program featuring:

3:45 – Opening remarks by Head of School Judith Cunningham

3:45 to 4:00 – Upper Elementary Choral Ensemble, led by Elizabeth Smith

“Bridge Over Troubled Water,” by Simon and Garfunkel.

“Tall Oaks From Little Acorns Grow,” an original song co-written by Elizabeth Smith and the Upper Elementary students, based on the Oak Farm motto, and title quotation, by David Everett (1769-1813).

“Wavin’ Flag” – as performed by the Young Artists for Haiti.

4:00 to 4:05 – Open Music Students, led by Elizabeth Smith

4:05 to 4:20 – Lower Elementary Music Ensemble, led by Elizabeth Smith

- “Catch A Falling Star,” “Orff Style.

- “All You Need is Love,” by The Beatles.

- “Peace Dance,” exploring harmonic parts using a canon.

4:20 to 4:30 – OFMS School of Rock Band, led by Elizabeth Smith. Featuring Aislinn Colburn on piano, Matthew Fortman on lead vocals, Sage Halsey on keyboard, Simran Kinker on background vocals and percussion, Desiree Nichols on background vocals and percussion, Nolan Roher on rhythm guitar, Elijah Shanton on drums, and Noah Treesh on lead guitar.

“The Letter,” by the Box Tops.

“If Your Dreams Come True”, original student composition.

4:30 – Closing remarks by Head of School Judith Cunningham

UPPER ELEMENTARY STUDENTS EXPLORE INDIANA DUNES

By Andrea Deihl, PE Teacher

Last week Upper Elementary students went on their annual camping adventure. This year they explored Indiana Dunes State Park and Indiana National Lakeshore in Chesterton, Indiana. Students not only were able to discover another state park through hiking, group lessons, and camping, but they also took this opportunity to come together as a group to work on cementing two areas: doing the right thing and eliminating unnecessary food waste.



The students arrived on Tuesday morning, excited to set up their tents and then to begin a hike on the dunes. We divided into two groups and agreed to meet at Lake Michigan halfway through the hike. This was the first sighting of a Great Lake for many of the students, and after hiking up and down sandy dunes, the sight was very welcome. Upon our return to camp after the five-mile excursion, the students cooked dinner and then sat around the campfire, listening to wildlife sounds (including raccoons rooting through a dumpster) and a local storyteller.

On the morning of day two the students had an opportunity to wake early for a sunrise dune hike to the beach a mile away. Then after breakfast, they were able to follow the choices they had made before leaving for the trip. They spent their day in four of five areas. Their choices included a dunes hike to the top of the three highest dunes in the park; a wetland hike to observe birds and other wildlife; a shipwreck adventure to hear tales of local shipwrecks; a walk through ecological time to learn how the dunes were formed; or a craft lesson on weaving bracelets. By the end of the afternoon, the students were ready for another dinner, followed by s'mores over a campfire and an evening of skits.



Some students chose to welcome day three with another sunrise hike to the dunes while others chose to sleep in a bit or help with breakfast. Students spent time after breakfast breaking down camp and loading everything up to return to Oak Farm.



Overall the students hiked between 5-15 miles, depending on their choice of activities, and made good choices throughout the trip, including having very little unnecessary food waste by their time's end. They also showed care for their environment by keeping any trash picked up, maintaining their tents, taking care of their personal items, cooking for themselves, and working together as a small and large group. At the end of the three days they had aptly displayed all the skills they had been working on in preparation for this spring venture and returned to Oak Farm with many stories to share among their families and friends.

WHAT IS IT THAT CHILDREN DESERVE?

By Candy Slabaugh, Toddler Teacher

Children are full of life and wonder. They deserve and need the adults around them to be at their best. Each person that is a part of a child's life becomes the child's teacher. We teach them how the world around them works. Children learn by observing everything in the world around them. The children learn the most by watching each of us! So how can we give them what they deserve? Below is a list of things that children deserve. I hope it gets each of us thinking about what matters the most.



Children deserve parents who make sure that they, the parents, find the support and nurture that they need so they can wholeheartedly love their children.

Children deserve parents who love one another and treat each other with kindness and respect even if the marriage doesn't last.

Children deserve parents who like themselves and who have creative work that they enjoy in addition to their employment.

Children deserve parents who remember when children spill the milk that they used to spill it too.

Children deserve parents who will rock them, or sit with them and look into their child's eyes.

Children deserve parents who will take them for a walk through the outdoors rather than buying them another toy.

Children deserve parents who take them to the library and come home with books about people who dream great dreams and overcome immense difficulties.

Children deserve parents who are willing to slow down from the rat race long enough to enter into the wonder of discovery with them.

Children deserve parents who allow them to work alongside, at their own pace, and with appropriate jobs so that each can feel a sense of accomplishment on completion.

Children deserve parents who are very selective about television watching, who study the program guide to know what quality programs exist and who will spend time reading or playing games instead of idly flicking on the switch.

Children deserve parents who have an extended family network of support and back-up nurture.

In closing, children deserve each and every one of us to be our best, to take time for ourselves and to know that the children in our lives need and deserve our best.