

May 2015 >>>

A publication of Sedona Charter School
K-8 Tuition-free Montessori School

Writing and Design: Sophia Zeno
Photography: Teachers and parents
Editor: Alice Madar



in this issue >>>

Bohemian Night of the Arts
Music Notes
Catalina Island Field Trip
Classroom Perspectives
Alumni Update
Letter from the President

academic excellence ...

personal growth ...

small school environment

Roadrunner report

Bohemians in Paris – A Night of the Arts



This event's showcase of each classroom's wide variety of visual and performance

art was a delight to watch by all of the family, friends and staff who attended the show on April 28th.

The first student artwork exhibit was held in the Middle School. One of the highlights of the Middle School's display included an original musical performance of songs collaboratively written by the students who participated in the Introduction to Singing and Songwriting Elective. Kamila Doran and elective instructor, Tara Middleton, serenaded the audience with "Hey Friend" and "Music is our Medicine," melodies that were recorded into CD form as a finale of the class and written by the students. Students also exhibited storybooks filled with personal narratives and poetry, as well as abstract art, interpretive art, and perspective pieces.

Next, Upper Elementary performed poetry, sang songs, and displayed

various artworks. Students performed a song about the solar system, which described each planet in order, allowing them to learn about the solar system in a fun and interactive way. Next, Upper Elementary students sang the alphabet in Spanish while simultaneously using English sign language to sign the letters



as they sang. Students constructed various crafts, including mandalas made of sticks, yarn, and various other nick knacks that made each one unique and beautiful.

Lower Elementary portrayed their artwork in the form of voice, performing various songs taught by Annette Foldes. Her extensive professional music instruction was made possible by a

generous grant from Sedona's Artist in the Classroom program. For the Lower Elementary performance, students sang a medley of songs from the *Mary Poppins* musical, and *Sing!* by the Carpenters. Annette stated that she chose songs that would allow her students to learn rhythm, tempo, pronunciation of lyrics, and musical cues indicated by her instruction and by the piano. "Kick Your Knees Up" was accompanied by strategic clapping and stomping by the students, which was a great example of some of the techniques they learned during their singing class. Students from LE also created Azoic art, as well as 3D art.

Each student's creativity contributed to a great accumulation of artistic talent and hard work on display.



Lower Elementary Field Trips



puppet show. At group meetings, Ms. Katarina has been reading dinosaur factual stories. Students have also been studying the prehistoric age and the history of the earth.

The third grade class will be taking their annual field trip to the Grand Canyon.

ride to one of the Seven Natural Wonders of the World! The Grand Canyon adventurers will also hike a bit of the Bright Angel Trail, where they will hear legends about the formation of the Grand Canyon to complement their scientific readings and work on the train.

Two exciting field trip opportunities are coming up for students in Lower Elementary! On Friday, May 1st, kindergarten through 2nd grade will visit the Museum of Northern Arizona. There, they will focus on the dinosaur exhibit and see a dinosaur

This field trip serves as a rite of passage and a celebration of the third grade successful completion of the Lower Elementary curriculum. Students will be traveling on the Grand Canyon Railroad, an iconic and scenic train



Catalina Coastal Science Field Trip

Beginning on May 3rd, a group of nine Middle School students will commence upon a much anticipated field trip to Catalina Island. An exciting series of activities have been planned throughout their weeklong visit. The students and chaperoning teachers will visit the Mountain and Sea Adventure Science Camp, where they will observe, study, and interact with ocean life.

Students will also enjoy snorkeling adventures, including a night dive to observe bioluminescent sea life.

During class instruction this semester, 8th graders have been looking over information regarding ocean environments, food webs, and aspects of ocean ecology, which will give them a basis of information going into the science camp. Students will also be spending a night on the Queen Mary ship, a retired ocean liner that sailed primarily on the North Atlantic Ocean from 1936 to 1967.

There will be no shortage of fun and educational activities on this field trip!

Advanced Math in UE

With the last day of school being less than a month away, Upper Elementary students have not wasted any time in completing their work, especially when it comes to math. Each student is given an allotted amount of work to be completed each week in



each subject. Bill Baker, UE Principal Educator, reports that all 42 students in his classroom have completed their math work for the entire year, which means that they have been striving above and beyond their weekly assignments. Thirty four of the UE students have taken the initiative to work on assignments that were intended for next year, and some are as far as 63 assignments ahead. The students are displaying their ability to be autonomous learners by their outstanding ability to complete more than what is mandatory in their math lessons.

Four students from the Upper Elementary classroom decided to apply their advanced math skills at the Tri-City Math competition with their 7th and 8th grade peers. Our 6th grade representatives were the youngest contestants in the competition. Although they were faced with complex math problems, they were excited by the opportunity to further challenge themselves beyond their current accelerated accomplishments. The students reported that they had fun and felt lucky to be given such a learning experience, and were honored to be some of the only 6th representatives from the Verde Valley.

Tri-City Math Competition

On April 23rd, ten Middle School Students travelled to Prescott to represent Sedona Charter School in the Tri-City Math Invitational. Since participating in March's Yavapai County Math Contest, the Middle School students prepared for their upcoming competition and focused on specific strategies of preparation.

Students completed problem sets from 7th and 8th grade math exit exams, and especially focused on the problems that were most frequently missed in these sets in order to improve their knowledge in a well rounded way.

The competition was composed in three parts. First the students participated in the team competition, where small groups of students opposed each other to solve a series of 10 questions in 45 minutes. In the second portion, individual students were given problem sets to complete

alone. The winning individuals from each school moved on to the third round, called the College Bowl. Ana Stecklein, Alexia Miller and Drew Maguire participated in the third and final round where they were tested with the most advanced questions of the tournament. The College Bowl portion was organized in a Jeopardy theme, where students raced to hit their buzzers when they were ready to declare an answer.

Middle School Math Teacher, Tim Marsh, stated

that this year he was trying to get a feel for the various math competitions and what seemed to be most beneficial for his students. Both Tim and the 7th graders have expressed that they have found this year's tournaments to be both helpful and fun, and plan to make at least one competition an annual occasion.



Ask a Teacher >>>

Tara Middleton—Why do you teach Intro to Singing and Songwriting?

Tara Middleton's Middle School elective, Introduction to Singing and Songwriting, reflected some of her own inspirations as a successful local artist, while also teaching students the fundamentals of creating their own music through professional techniques. Tara holds that creating music has been an amazing outlet of expression throughout her life, and she instructed her class with the intention to give the capacity of expression to young adolescents, encouraging her students to transform their beliefs into lyrics. Participants happened to be all girls, who developed a sense of female empowerment through their collaborative creation of music.

With this class, the girls were given a creative outlet to speak about what is important to them, sometimes incorporating their group perspective, and other times writing music individually. The girls displayed great confidence as they worked on stage presence while performing at various Sedona Charter School events, including the Whole Foods Fundraiser, and Bohemian Night of the Arts. They even recorded a CD of their songs written during the quarter!



Improvements to the SCS Strings Program

As the Strings program steadily progresses with an increasing demand of student participants, renovations are being applied in order to accommodate our students' musical education. Strings instructor, Kristina Beachell, will be working full time as a Suzuki Method instructor for Sedona Charter School, and is putting into effect some changes for the upcoming school year.

Parent involvement in a child's musical improvement is crucial in the Suzuki method. For this reason, Kristina is implementing a class for parents with children in the Strings and orchestra programs to better enable them to understand their child's musical education, and to help them while they practice at home.

In addition to the existing advanced orchestra, a beginners orchestra will also be available for Kristina's students who wish to expand upon their participation in the program.

Don't miss the Spring Strings concert on May 12th!

President's Letter

Another year has come and gone. We are proud of what our students have accomplished this year.

Many of our 8th graders went to New York to the Model United Nations Conference to learn how it functions and to participate in learning with other students around the world.

A peaceful leadership program was instituted which will help all of us understand what is needed from ourselves and each other to be valuable citizens of our town, state, country, and of the world community.

Our strings program and performances were so successful that we were able to hire our strings teacher as a full-time teacher position.

Across all grades students have worked diligently, demonstrating to the State of Arizona in achieving standardized test completion, and to our Sedona Charter School community by their focus and dedication to learning, a new level of promise which speaks well for them and for our future.

Yours Sincerely,
Maureen Nealon

staff >>>

Lower Elementary: Bob and Terri Wentsch, Katarina Houser, Ginny Bianco, Dolores Biermann

Upper Elementary: Bill Baker, Shandra Ryan, Jim Leinbach

Middle School: Jenn Jordan, Tim Marsh

Administration: Alice Madar, Taylor Pascuzzo, Sophia Zeno, Lucy Schwill

Title I and Strings: Teri Lechowski, Kristina Beachell



contact us at 928-204-6464
www.sedonacharterschool.com

165 Kachina Drive
Sedona, AZ 86336

Our Mission: Our Montessori school challenges each child to achieve excellence through an individualized program. We inspire a passion for learning, instill a sense of personal responsibility, and cultivate a respect for the environment and involvement in the community.



looking ahead >>>

June 2015

*Year End Wrap Up
Planning for Fall*

alumni news >>>

From Roadrunner to Sun Devil, with Honors

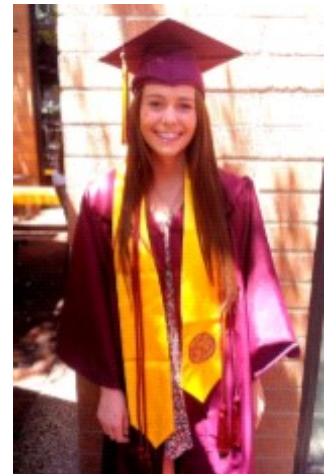
Lucy Shanks attended Sedona Charter School for 7th and 8th Grade, and graduated from Red Rock High School in the top ten percent of her class. During high school, Lucy also made Principal's Honor Roll and earned a 4.0 GPA, and held a position as student council senior class representative, and executive board member of the National Honor Society.

After Lucy's extensive high school accomplishments, she took her talents to Arizona State University in Tempe, and graduated Cum Laude with a Bachelor's of Science degree in Nutrition and Dietetics with a certification in child nutrition.

Lucy attributes many of her accomplishments to lessons she learned at Sedona Charter School. One of her most memorable moments was learning something about her own moral compass, "Throughout the school year, we had opportunities to earn funny money for things like good behavior and answering questions in class. On the last day of school, we had a field trip to the

local park, where we had the opportunity to spend our funny money on prizes. After I bought an item, I noticed that one of the teachers had given me the wrong change back. Somehow I ended up with significantly more money than I was supposed to. I approached Mrs. Burke and Mrs. Calhoun, explained the situation, and handed them the extra money. They didn't take the money and allowed me to keep in, saying that I had earned it by being honest. I'll never forget that moment, when they taught me that honesty is something to be rewarded for."

In addition to lessons of integrity, Lucy also learned important lessons that would benefit her in future high school and college endeavors. "The Montessori education allowed me to explore and develop my individual talents by offering a range of classes to choose from. I learned how to work with others through group projects. In college, I was required to do many presentations both alone and in groups. My education at SCS also required



Lucy Shanks

presentations, often in front of the whole Middle School. These experiences definitely helped prepare me for college. The emphasis on hands-on learning and utilization of materials also taught me how to grasp difficult concepts in a fun and interactive way."