

# *Hermosa Community Times*

Hermosa Montessori School Newsletter, November 2009

*“Cultivating the love of learning for over 30 years”*

## **“Attitude of Gratitude”**

During this season when we traditionally give thanks we asked a variety of Hermosa parents, students, teachers, staff, and alumni the question, “What are you most grateful for at Hermosa?” Here are some of their replies.

### **Hermosa parents:**

- “I’m grateful my kids are at Hermosa in a peaceful classroom with high standards, zero tolerance for inappropriate behavior, and an emphasis on positive values.”
- “Every Hermosa staff member, from administration to past teachers and my child’s current teacher is a positive part of my child’s life and direction.”
- “We are delighted our child can attend this amazing school! The staff is incredible. We feel lucky.”
- “My family is grateful for the way Hermosa really cares about our children. We love how our kids are developing as people! The respect we as parents experience from the teachers and office staff is so positive. Overall, it’s so much better than our last school, and *that was an excelling school, too!*”
- “I’m thankful that my three children have gained so much from attending Hermosa...and, that we didn’t have to pay private school tuition!”

### **Hermosa students:**

- “I’m grateful for my teachers. They’re nice. They help me a lot!”
- “I *love* school, especially my teachers and my friends!”
- “I like how I feel when I finish my work. I like helping my class and helping my teacher.”
- “I’m grateful for my classroom and friends. School is pretty fun!”

### **Hermosa teachers and staff:**

- “I love coming to work every day. Everyone is excited to work here.”
- “I love the fact that the kids are excited about learning.”
- “What am I grateful for at Hermosa? Everything!”
- “I’m grateful for my fellow teachers, the community we create, and supportive staff.”
- “I’m grateful for the Land Lab, the outdoor experiences we get to have, and the way we build community there.”

**Alumni:** “I’m grateful Hermosa helped me learn how to think for myself, be disciplined, and responsible. Now, I know how to lead, and when or who to follow.”

If you would like to share what you are grateful for at Hermosa, please send an e-mail to [randyb@hermosaschool.org](mailto:randyb@hermosaschool.org).

## **Arizona Tax Credits Needed: Please Call Relatives, Friends, and Businesses!**

Hermosa needs tax credit contributions more than ever. Arizona is now #50 of all the United States in per pupil education funding! You can help. Please take a little time to ask your relatives, friends, neighbors, and everyone you do business with to give a tax credit donation to “one of Arizona’s best public schools.” Think of the businesses where you spend money. This includes your insurance agent, accountant, mortgage lender, hair stylist, real estate agent, auto dealer, dry cleaner, builder, HOA directors, etc. You can tell them with confidence that Hermosa is an “Excelling” school in academics, values and ethics that also provides outstanding extracurricular education, including art, music, P.E., and choir! Let them know Hermosa is “One of Arizona’s Top 10 Charter Schools” (2009, Arizona Department of Education). Your donor will receive a prompt “thank you” letter and a receipt from Hermosa so the donor can claim their tax credit: \$400 if married filing jointly; \$200 if filing single. If you have tax credit candidates you would like Hermosa to contact on your behalf, call Randy Brauer at 749-5518, ext. 218. He will gladly assist you. Please help. Thank you!

## **Johns Hopkins University Recognizes 60 “Top Students” at Hermosa**

Johns Hopkins University’s Center for Talented Youth (CTY) began over 30 years ago when Dr. Julian Stanley, a psychology professor at Johns Hopkins University, introduced the first Talent Search designed to identify, challenge, and reward academically able young people. CTY’s mission is to inspire young people by offering distinctive educational opportunities that nurture intellectual abilities, advance academic achievement, and enhance personal development. CTY is in its third decade of offering gifted children a special program that parallels and complements their regular school experiences. Through state test results, CTY is able to identify top academic students from grades two through eight and provide challenging education programs through 12<sup>th</sup> grade. To qualify for the talent search a student must score in the 95<sup>th</sup> percentile or higher on a reasoning section of a nationally standardized test (e.g. TerraNova) or have state test results categorized at the highest levels of performance (such as “Exceeds” on the AIMS) in either reading, math or both. As members of the Hermosa Montessori community, we can share in the pleasure of knowing that 60 out of the 157 children who participated in the 2009 AIMS and TerraNova state tests are eligible to participate in the 2010 CTY talent search. Congratulations Hermosa students! For more information visit: <http://cty.jhu.edu/>.

## **Hermosa Land Lab Advances with “Green” Technology, and a Gift!**

Hermosa Middle School students recently spent several days and nights camping out at the new 15 acre Hermosa Land Lab in a beautiful Vail valley adjacent to Colossal Cave. The Land Lab is the generous gift of Hermosa teacher Randy Young. The Land Lab serves as a means for students to gain practical knowledge of academic lessons through real-life applications in natural environments. This most recent experience included lessons, exercises, and applications of “green technology.” Students learned the dynamics and value of making natural adobe bricks from recycled paper which was mixed with water, clay, and sand found on-site. The lessons integrated science, teamwork, and a lot of fun. Making the adobe bricks required a large machine that mixed the raw and recycled materials to produce the correct “mix” for the bricks. After observing the success of the lesson and the students’ effectiveness in using the machine, Randy Young invested \$750 to buy the mixing machine so students can continue this lesson, and their “green” construction, for many years to come. Once again, thank you, Randy Young!

## **“Parental Guidance” is here: Montessori Education Videos**

All Hermosa parents are encouraged to learn more about our educational model by visiting <http://www.edvid.com/>. You will find free educational videos monthly, plus excerpts and complete transcripts from numerous informative Montessori presentations. The American Montessori Society website, [www.amshq.org](http://www.amshq.org), has current research papers on the Montessori model and position papers on curriculum topics. The more informed you are, the more you can support your student at Hermosa.

**Next Month: Hermosa science reports from lower el, upper el, & middle school!**

## **Hermosa Receives Generous Gift from Gressieux Family**

Hermosa's music programs offer deep gratitude for the recent donation made by Andre Gressieux and Keleigh Culpepper, parents of Hermosa preschooler Cambria, as well as toddler, Scarlett, and newborn baby, August. Their generous gift benefits both our general music and choir programs by providing new instruments, curricula materials and an acoustic piano for choir. Hermosa students will be enjoying these gifts for many years to come! Hermosa students and staff sing out: *"Thank you to Andre and Keleigh!"* If your family, or others you know, would like to contribute to Hermosa, please contact Development Director Randy Brauer at 749-5518, ext. 218. Contributions are tax-deductible.

## **Art Students Create Ceramics, Paper; Learn History & Culture, too!**

In classic Hermosa tradition, lower elementary students are in the process of creating hand-decorated ceramic holiday ornaments and handmade holiday wrapping paper. Soon they will begin work on another Hermosa tradition, giant dragon puppets. The puppets take over a month to create and assemble. They will be displayed at the Chinese New Year Parade in February.

Fourth year students are beginning an integrated learning process of creating handmade paper collages on the theme of the dragon. While making the paper they will be learning about the history of paper, how it was first created (by accident) by a Chinese emperor, then disseminated throughout the Middle East and Europe by means of the Silk Road. Students will also be working with Pat DuMont to create poems about their dragons. These pieces will be displayed at the Chinese New Year Parade.

Fifth year art elective students have created four fired and glazed decorative and functional ceramic projects. They will also display these at the Chinese New Year Parade in February 2010.

Hermosa's art program extends its heartfelt thanks to John Carver for the extraordinarily sophisticated workshop that he is teaching for the 6th year art elective students. Students are learning how to compose photographs using digital cameras and to manipulate them in Adobe Photoshop. They have looked at the work of Andy Warhol and created self portraits in the style of this artist. They have photographed Hermosa both outdoors and in the classrooms, and are creating a book "A Day in the Life of Hermosa."

## **Tucson Symphony and Hermosa Students Charm One Another**

On Wednesday, November 18, five great musicians from the Tucson Symphony Orchestra educated, inspired, and entertained Hermosa's lower elementary students. The TSO Woodwind Quartet, including featured soloists, Letitia Bryant, Jeremy Reynolds, Alexander Lipay, and Sarah Fraker, were joined by lead French Horn player, Johanna Lundy. These gifted musicians took turns sharing different symphonic stories and music lessons featuring their instrument's sound, range, and function in an ensemble. Each soloist enthusiastically told their musical story, describing which part the various instruments would be portraying. Upon completion she or he would ask the students to identify parts of the story and tell which instrument it featured. Children swayed or bounced happily to the beautiful music and quickly raised their hands to answer the musicians' questions. The musical selections were clearly fun for the children to hear and observe. The quintet closed with a jazzy version of "Blue Skies." They encouraged the children to "bring your parents to hear the symphony." They told the children that, with patience and practice, they could "learn to play anything." In closing, the musicians kindly complimented the students by saying, "Hermosa students are always on their best behavior. That's one reason we love playing for you!"

**"It is the spirit of the child that can determine the course of human progress and lead it perhaps to a higher form of civilization." Maria Montessori**

## **Hermosa Children's Chorus & Hermosa Singers Perform**

The Hermosa Children's Chorus (lower elementary students) and the Hermosa Singers (upper elementary students) will give their first performance of this school year on Dec. 12. Both choirs will be performing along with two community choirs: Heritage Singers, a youth choir, and "Seasons," a women's choir. Join us for this free concert starting at 7 p.m., Saturday, December 12<sup>th</sup>. The location is Christ Community Church, 655 N. Craycroft, just north of 5<sup>th</sup> St. on the west side of Craycroft. There will be a large audience so come early! Even if your child is not in the choir be sure to attend anyway. This winter concert will be a huge family event and will set a sweet tone for your holiday season.

### **Dates to Remember:**

Nov. 25-27	Thanksgiving Break	No school
Nov. 30-Dec. 4	Middle School Internships	
Dec. 12, 7 p.m.	Hermosa Choral Performance	
Dec. 16, 6 p.m.	Upper Elementary Pot Luck Dinner	
Dec. 19-Jan. 3	Winter Break	No school

## **"Hermosa Teachers Are Priceless; They're All Giving 110%"**

Even though Arizona education funding is now the lowest in all 50 states, it is amazing that Hermosa Montessori teachers continue to be so incredibly dedicated and effective with our children! A long-time Hermosa parent recently remarked, "Hermosa's teachers are priceless; they're all giving 110%!" Any parents who have spent much time volunteering or observing in Hermosa classrooms know this is true.

Did you know that Hermosa teachers often voluntarily work overtime? Many teachers invest over 50 hours per week for a 40-hour salary. Due to Arizona's underfunding of charter schools those salaries do not match their district counterparts, even though Hermosa's teachers typically achieve better academic results and better character development for our kids! Still, some Hermosa teachers arrive early and/or stay late every day. Other Hermosa teachers work on weekends to improve their service to students or to refine their classrooms, quietly coming and going without anyone knowing, without extra pay. Hermosa teachers even put their own money into their rooms to maximize the beauty and effectiveness of the classroom. Many Hermosa teachers have invested thousands of their own dollars for the sake of their students, to benefit our children. They do this from their hearts.

Generosity, kindness, and hard work are also modeled by our Principal. Few know that she voluntarily pays herself one of the lowest principal-superintendent salaries in Arizona, even though she is ranked as one of Arizona's best by our State Superintendent of Public Instruction! Hermosa's principal masterfully multi-tasks each day. She achieves administration responsibilities, accounting, teaching, special education, and mentoring. She also carries the financial risks and burdens that built Hermosa's facilities and keeps them so well-maintained. Financial burdens like this are never required of any principal in traditional public school districts.

The Hermosa administrative staff, support staff, and teaching assistants also "volunteer" their time and talents on a regular basis, routinely "going the extra mile" to make the school better for everyone. They seem to always work with kindness and good cheer. In this season of thanksgiving, please take a moment to consider the many gifts given by Hermosa teachers and staff to help our children learn, excel, and have the opportunity to create a better world. Expressing your respect and appreciation for Hermosa's teachers and staff, in kind words, thoughts, donations, or other gestures, helps tremendously in these challenging times. It is also a valuable example of gratitude: to teach our children to appreciate the "priceless" place and people that make Hermosa Montessori a great school. Submitted by Randy Brauer, Hermosa parent and Development Director

**"The child is both a hope and a promise for mankind." Maria Montessori**