



THE BELLE RINGER

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The Official Newsletter of Belle Meade Montessori School



Left: Hannah practices jumping Johnny in the ring.

Right: Maze carries a rider, Alyssa, unassisted for the first time.

Left Photo by Venla, Right Photo by Lauren

Riding Update

We recently received two new horses and have begun to train them. While Raja is still learning to stand still, Maze, is learning by leaps and bounds. When we first acquired these horses, they did not know how to carry a rider, respond to steering, or anything else that is required to ride them.

Since then, Lauren, with the aid of a few students, has taught Maze to carry a rider and what the steering signals mean, and we just had a huge breakthrough. Maze carried a rider and walked around the ring without Lauren leading her, only following the directions of the rider.

Another horse has been vastly improving lately as well. Johnny first came to us extremely overweight and not able to do much. While still chubby, he's in better shape and we are beginning to jump him. He can now jump 2'9", something his owner never thought he'd be able to do.

—Alyssa

Barn Repairs Underway

Students began working in much needed repairs to the Belle Meade horse barn. Because the barn was hand built in the 1800s, some of the walls of the stalls and barn have been falling apart. On community work day, we have repaired the walls and putting mulch on the ground of the stalls and barn. We have multiple people doing different things such as cutting wood, putting up walls, spreading chips in the barn, spreading mulch in the stalls, and bringing the chips in with the tractor. The barn is already looking a whole lot better.

—Sofie

UPCOMING EVENTS

Fri. Dec. 20
Holiday Party
12:30 p.m. Release

Dec. 23-Jan. 3
NO SCHOOL
Winter Break

Jan. 9-Feb. 6
Skiing on Thursdays

Jan. 13
Midterm

Feb. 17
STEAM Day

Feb. 17
End-of-Term

Anna Keeps School Running



Photo by Anna

Anna started working here because she liked working in school. Susan let her know she wanted to hire someone who could do administrative work, and Anna knew Susan because Sofie went to the camp when she was 3. Anna also worked at the bed and breakfast in 2011 after moving in to the guest house that is now a primary school. Anna has

worked at the school science 2012 and takes care of administrative tasks, such as writing grants and keeping student records up to date.

—Mia

Trimester Dinner in Review

The Trimester Dinner was very eventful and lively! The high schoolers performed a mock Virginia Supreme Court case that showcased their study of American History. The middle schoolers also put on a performance of their Easter Readings Language Arts class with a shadow puppet theater of an ancient Chinese version of Cinderella.

This last trimester dinner was accompanied by Kimber and the band. They played a total of five songs. Their music ranged from classic rock to contemporary pop. The band consisted of Hannah and Lillie (vocals), Reilly (drums), Kimber (guitar/bass), and Gavin (guitar).

Everyone who attended brought food. The theme of the dinner was Greek as the middle schoolers are studying Eastern culture and history and wanted to have a dinner that related to what they were learning. The food that was brought was delicious and ranged from salad, tzatziki sauce, and gyros. We also had dessert, including cake, pie, ice cream, and baklava.

—Lilie and Morgan



Drama/Music Literacy Begins

This year we are going to be doing skits. Many students have been working diligently on creating scripts for this! There is a wide range from original skits to those that refer to movies and T.V. shows. Students have also been working on music for the skits, too. Whether it's performed in between acts or during one of the short skits, it is bound to be amazing. Stay tuned for updates as we hope to see you at our actual performances on March 6 and 7.

As part of our drama class, we're learning music literacy, which is how to read music, find pitch and eventually create music. We start each class with a quick discussion of a new concept of music. For the one class it was clefs and BPM (beats per measure), and another, it was finding a pitch with our voices. After this short music literacy segment, students are dispersed to either work on actual music that a select few students are writing, and others go to work on their skits for the school performance. Everyone is very excited to move forward with this class, creating music, and comedy of our own.

—Joseph and Hannah



Photo by Chris Doxzen with RappNews.com

Neighbors Helping Neighbors

Rappahannock County partnered up with Neighbors Helping Neighbors, a non-profit organization, on Nov. 9 to help repair and fix up people's homes who don't have resources to do it by themselves. A few students and John also took part on this.

The day consisted mainly of yard work, such as raking, carrying firewood and building new steps for a porch. Participants also destroyed a shed with a sledgehammer and multiple axes, which was fun! Everybody had a nice day outside in a stunning weather while helping people in need.

—Venla

Creating a Belle Meade Winter Wonderland

Surprise Christmas Tree Appears



Photo by Lucas

The Christmas tree is special in case you hadn't realized. Allow me to let you in on a little secret. The tree was actually two Charlie Brown trees tied together. The tree is traditionally decorated by ribbon, ornaments and garland. But then, Santa came in and decided it was not good enough. He brought in a brand new tree and to celebrate the holiday season.

—Lucas

Chores Change for Winter

Every year when it gets colder and turns to winter, chores change accordingly to the weather. We raise turkeys for Thanksgiving and meat chickens, which we don't keep throughout the whole year, so we don't always have the same chores.

During the warmer days we have Garden Chore, where we take care of the garden, but as winter begins, we move onto Firewood chore to make the school warmer.

We also have library chore, where we label and sort books into shelves and catalog them into a website, Library doesn't change through the year, but it will be downsized once the books are all categorized. For horse chore, my favorite chore, we start giving the horses grain.

—Lela

Holiday Party Plans

The very anticipated Holiday Ball shall on Friday, Dec. 20, of the Year of Our Lord Two Thousand and Nineteen. The most ethereal of all pines have been retrieved from the Swiss Alps. A small hole has been cut in the ballroom ceiling to allow growing space for the elegant pine. This will allow the pine to grow to its full height of 19 feet, 7 and 1/3rd inches. Gifts expected to be exchanged include jade, china, and linens.

—Archie, Jack and Reilly

Editors Note: This is a creative piece about the holiday party. While the party will be held on Friday, Dec. 20, no holes have been cut in the school. Students should bring a white elephant gifts about \$5 in value to exchange and sugar cookie decorations. School will let out at 12:30 p.m., and the bus will run on the early release schedule.



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