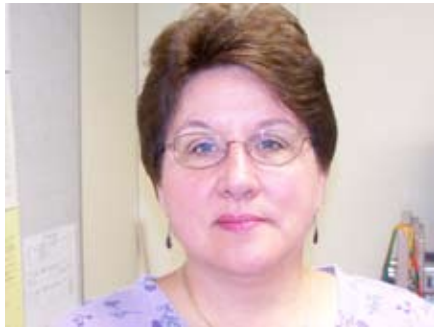


Winterfest Tomorrow Night

Update: Property

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We will be working hard but also plan to have a Happy Holiday and Winter Break and wish the same for all of you!



Let's hear it for Sandy Blay!

The News Digest

- Page 1Not sure what media to let your kids experience? Check it out ahead of time with **Common Sense Media**
- Page 1Kiyo has news on where we're headed, so to speak. Check out **Update: Property** for the details
- Page 2The Early Elementary is learning to **Ready, Set, Graph!**
- Page 2Intermediate Elementary is **Writing Folktales**
- Page 2Mrs. Hoff writes about a way to continue the learning out of school in **Explore Your World: Hands-On Museums**
- Page 2Keiko Morse wishes you a great **Winter Break**
- Page 2Check out the plan for **Winterfest 2009**, and remember, it's tomorrow night at 7 pm
- Page 2**Research Shows Brain Connections Improve with Reading Practice**, as if you needed more reason to get kids to read.
- Page 3Check out the list of **Real Animals and Science Fiction Power Reading Books** for next month
- Page 3While you're there, check out Power Reading for a disclaimer about book content.
- Page 4Check out **Update: Capital Campaign Highlight on our 1st Donor, Sandy Blay** for the first in a series on our donors and community members
- Page 4**ISACS Visits Steppingstone**. At least, the new Executive Director of ISACS does.

Update: Capital Campaign Highlight on our 1st Donor Sandy Blay

Many families and friends have donated to the Capital Campaign at this point, but we would like to highlight Steppingstone's Business Manager, Sandy Blay, who was the first to write her contribution check. When asked why, she said, "These kids need this school." Many of us were touched by her sentiment because she has no children enrolled at Steppingstone, and she is a relatively new member of the administrative staff.

Sandy is not wealthy and does not have a large disposable income. She said that she sat down with her paycheck, paid her other bills, and then looked to see what she could contribute to others. We are honored that she chose the Capital Campaign, the purpose of which is to provide an appropriate educational environment for gifted children in the Metro Detroit area.

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Sandy feels that the program Steppingstone offers gifted students is unique and important to preserve. She reiterates the position that while the Capital Campaign will provide a building for our program, it is the program itself which is being preserved—not only for our current students but also for students in the future.

If you have not yet made your donation, write your check now to get your 2009 tax deduction. In January we will begin to publish our donor lists, and we hope your name and the names of your friends, relatives and business colleagues will be included. Thank you to all of you who have already contributed towards 100% participation, and have a Happy Holiday and Winter Break.

2009 Raffle Ticket Update

as of 12/15/2009

Let's Get Selling! Good Luck!

Goal - 1200 Tickets (\$10,000)

Number of Tickets Sold - 409

Amount Earned - \$3,470.00

Percent of Goal Reached - 34.70%

Powell - 36 Total Tickets Sold

\$27.27 - Earned per class member

3.27 - Tickets sold per class member

Powell, Carol	0	Dwyer, Holden	30
Allen, Dylan	0	Jevtic, Katarina	0
Anantharaman, Savitri	0	Lock, William	0
Asmi, Natasha	0	Mondrusov, David	0
Butler, Brittany	6	Velasco, Sara	0
Corrigan, Melissa	0		

Hoff - 75 Total Tickets Sold

\$40.63 - Earned per class member

4.69 - Tickets sold per class member

Hoff, Linda	12	Jevtic, Filip	0
Baker, Lea	0	Kahn, Jessica	0
Collazo, Diego	0	Learned, Ryan	63
Collins, Cailey	0	Lurie, Alaina	0
Dekker, Alexander	0	Mondrusov, Daniel	0
Deming, Korina	0	Robbins, Thomas	0
Finkelstein, Emily	0	Seaman, Taylor	0
Gilmore, Ian	0	Thomas, Ann	0

Schultz - 125 Total Tickets Sold

\$80.77 - Earned per class member

9.62 - Tickets sold per class member

Schultz, Janelle	0	Kucharski, Garrett	30
Collazo, Isabel	0	Lampi, Jacob	39
Corrigan, Natalie	0	Robbins, Michael	0
Deming, Olivia	0	Sheth, Maya	0
Dyde, Noel	0	Warner, Sydney	24
Gilmore, Heather	2	Yamamoto, Celina	30
Keast, Meghan	0		

Morse - 80 Total Tickets Sold

\$46.33 - Earned per class member

5.33 - Tickets sold per class member

Morse, Keiko	0	Houdek, Evan	30
Bansil, Mohit	0	Kahn, Jacob	0
Collins, Thomas	0	Litt, Mollie	0
Elias, George	0	Nichols, Jamal	30
Epshteyn, Allison	0	Shah, Milan	0
Finkelstein, Noah	0	Varns, Joseph	20
Gaines, Leighton	0	Wood, Melissa	0
Gopalakrishnan, Pranav	0		

Board

& Staff - 93 Total Tickets Sold

\$40.79 - Earned per class member

4.89 - Tickets sold per Board & Staff member

Blackburn, Tony	0	Nellett, Kathy	0
Blay, Sandy	9	Niemisto, Rich	0
Bozin, Keith	15	Qyteti, Hektor	0
Coffin, Donna	0	Radz, Jerzey	0
Gage, Mary	0	Roder, Jason	0
Gaines, Don	9	Son, Yong	0
Herbst, Thomas	6	West, Mieko	0
Lin, Hong	0	Wojchichsky, Irene	0
Morse, Kiyo	1	Wojchihosky, Jerry	0
Morse, Reef	23	Furman, Nancy	30

Winterfest Tomorrow Night

Upcoming Events ...

FRI, Dec 18
7 pm, Winterfest

MON - FRI, Dec 25 - Jan 1
NO SCHOOL—Winter Break

MON, Jan 4
School Resumes

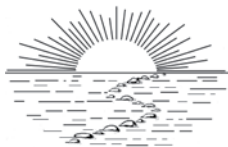
Deadline: Fridays, one week prior to Thursday publication dates.

Email articles to:
jroder@steppingstoneschool.org

cc:
therbst@steppingstoneschool.org



Teaching the world to sing, one student at a time...



Steppingstone is an independent, state-approved 501(c) (3) non-profit elementary school (K-8) for gifted students. Steppingstone does not discriminate based on race, color, creed, gender, religion, or national or ethnic origin in the administration of any school policy or program.

28555 Middlebelt Road
Farmington Hills, MI 48334
Phone: 248.539.1666
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www.steppingstoneschool.org

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Common Sense Media

Looking for help deciding the movies, TV shows, music, and video games to which you should allow your children access? One website that offers insight and useful information is www.common-sense-media.org Check it out.

Update: Property

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Ready, Set, Graph!

Ms. Powell, Early Elementary

When students return following Winter Break, they will begin graphing. Being able to recognize and write symbols when working with number operations is also a mathematical skill. As students learn to graph, they learn position, order, and the direction of the sequence. Although graphing is easy for some, remembering to go bottom-to-top and left-to-right is confusing for others. Simple games such as "Numeral Dice Toss" will help students learn to fill in a grid. Graphs can be used to ask students their opinions, help them organize predictions and estimates, and sort and categorize information.

To help students get ready to "graph," let them use an egg carton to graph your family's choice of two vegetables. Whatever you choose to represent their choice, they will want to graph something else! So get ready, set, graph!

Writing Folktales

Ms. Schultz, Intermediate Elementary

Imagine: no restrictions, no rules, and no worries! Shortly, the students in the Intermediate Elementary will be able to experience just that by immersing themselves into all the different types of folktales.

I am thrilled to share with you that Intermediate Elementary students will be exposed to and have the opportunity to choose from a Fool's Tale, A Tall Tale, An Animal Tale, or a Folktale about themselves. This will be a creative assignment, and it will be fun, too. However, before they can be successful, they will need to do one thing.

In the past, students have practiced writing about what they know. We agreed that the BEST writers write about their own life experiences and lessons. During this next week, please help your child brainstorm ideas about what they know, and then help them turn it into a small idea where their imagination can take them to places they have never been before. Remember one thing: all folktales have a moral or lesson. The challenge, then, is to ask your child what lesson or message they want to send to their readers.

Happy writing!

Explore Your World: Hands-on-Museums

Mrs. Hoff, Upper Elementary

The groans of the two Hoff children could be heard throughout our neighborhood whenever they had a day off from school. That meant that Mom had organized an educational field trip. At the time, giving up playtime with friends or sleep time seemed like the end of the world. As young adults now, they fondly remember looking at the stars in the Cranbrook Observatory or blowing body-size bubbles at the Ann Arbor Hands On Museum.

School days off due to teacher workdays or holidays are the perfect time to begin exploring the rich educational resources that our communities provide. Cranbrook Institute of Science in Bloomfield Hills, Ann Arbor Hands On Museum, Detroit Science Center, Flint Children's Museum, Impression 5 Science Center in Lansing, and Toledo Science Center all offer hands-on opportunities for learning science within a two hour drive from your home. Making connections with the real world makes the learning that occurs at Steppingstone more relevant to the student. Also, check out *Science Verse* by Jon Scieszka and Lane Smith. Poetry and science come alive and further connect the students to the experiences they have had at the hands-on museums.

Putting up with the complaints and groans now is well worth the comments of young adults who remember things you have even forgotten! Watch for your next installment of Explore Your World!

(Just don't overdo it. Our students need "down" time too)

Winter Break

Ms. Morse, Pre High School

This is the last newsletter for the year 2009! I hope that everyone has a great break, and we will see you in 2010. Please remember that if you love your teacher, you will make sure your child gets to bed on time the weekend before school starts—especially you parents of teenagers! This will help smooth the return to school. Have fun, do lots of sledding, and enjoy your families.

Have a good Winter Break!

Winterfest 2009

Date: FRI, DEC 18, 2009 — LAST DAY

Time: 7:00 PM

Place: Gymnasium

All students have a part in the Winterfest. If your child cannot attend due to another commitment, please let his/her teacher know immediately. It is very difficult for other children to perform when there are unexpected absences within their performance groups.

Attire: Students should be dressed in clothing appropriate for a concert. We want them to be attractively attired ladies and handsomely dressed young men for their audience. No denim or sneakers.

Bring a Snack to Share: Help us celebrate this last performance event of the year with a snack to share. Most welcome are fresh vegetables or fruit, dips, cheeses, crackers, breads, chips, pretzels, or ethnic treats. If you bring baked goods, please make them low sugar, and DO NOT BRING CANDY. Punch will be provided.

For the enjoyment of all, Parents, please keep all your children with you, especially during the refreshment period. Let's make this an enjoyable event that doesn't require disciplinary redirection of your child. Remember the Winterfest is a wonderful time to talk to other parents and to get to know new families and staff members.

Research Shows Brain Connections Improve with Reading Practice

Students who practice reading can strengthen their brains—especially the white-matter connections essential to learning, according to research by scientists at the Center for Cognitive Brain Imaging at Carnegie Mellon University in Pittsburgh. Researchers scanned students' brains, then enrolled struggling readers in an intensive reading program. Researchers again scanned students' brains, this time after 100 hours of reading practice, and found the training improved "not just their reading ability, but the tissues in their brain."



Real Animals and Science Fiction Power Reading Books

Early & Intermediate—Real Animals

Bauer, Marion Dane	<i>Alison's Puppy</i>
*Bokoske, Sharon	<i>Dolphins</i>
Boland, Janice	<i>Dog Named Sam</i>
Brett, Jessica	<i>Animals on the Go</i>
*Brimner, Larry Dane	<i>Firehouse Sal</i>
*Bulla, Clyde Robert	<i>Daniel's Duck</i>
*Capucilli, Alyssa Satin	<i>Biscuit</i>
Clements, Andrew	<i>Ringo Saves the Day</i>
Farley, Walter	<i>Little Black, A Pony</i>
Fowler, Allan	<i>Friendly Dolphins</i>
Fowler, Allan	<i>Really Big Cats</i>
*Gág, Wanda	<i>Millions of Cat</i>
George, Jean Craighead	<i>Nutik, the Wolf Pup</i>
Haas, Jessie	<i>Runaway Radish</i>
*Keats, Ezra Jack	<i>Pet Show!</i>
Keller, Holly	<i>I Am Angela</i>
King-Smith, Dick	<i>Jenius, the Amazing Guinea Pig</i>
Kopper, Lisa	<i>Daisy Knows Best</i>
Lang, Glenna	<i>Looking out for Sarah</i>
MacLachlan, Patricia	<i>Three Names</i>
Nagda, Ann Whitehead	<i>Perfect Cat-Sitter</i>
Oates, Joyce Carol	<i>Come Meet Muffin</i>
Parish, Peggy	<i>Scruffy</i>
Polacco, Patricia	<i>John Philip Duck</i>
Ray, Deborah Kogan	<i>My Dog Trip</i>
*Rylant, Cynthia	<i>Mr. Putter and Tabby Walk the dog</i>
*Sams, Carl R.	<i>Stranger in the Woods</i>
Simont, Marc	<i>Stray Dog</i>
Siracusa, Catherine	<i>Bingo the Best Dog in the World</i>
Stadler, John	<i>Cats of Mrs. Calamari</i>
Wells, Rosemary	<i>Lucy Comes to Stay</i>
Zimmerman, Andrea Griffing	<i>My Dog Toby</i>

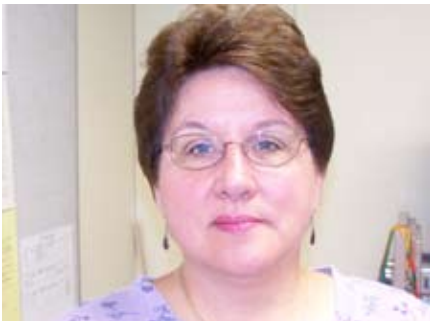
Upper & PHS—Science Fiction

Asch, Frank	<i>Journey to Terezor</i>
*Asimov, Isaac	<i>New Hugo Winners Volume II</i>
*Asimov, Isaac	<i>Rest of the Robots</i>
Christopher, John	<i>White Mountains</i>
Crilley, Mark	<i>Akiko and the Journey to Toog</i>
Daley, Michael J.	<i>Space Station Rat</i>
Danziger, Paula	<i>This Place Has No Atmosphere</i>
Farmer, Nancy	<i>Ear, the Eye, and the Arm</i>
*Griffin, Peni R.	<i>Switching Well</i>
Gutman, Dan	<i>Virtually Perfect</i>
Heinlein, Robert A	<i>Red Planet</i>
Hulme, John	<i>The Seems: The Glitch in Sleep</i>
*Huxley, Aldous	<i>Brave New World</i>
Johansen, K. V.	<i>Cassandra Virus</i>
Keyes, Daniel	<i>Flowers for Algernon</i>
Klause, Annette Curtis	<i>Alien Secrets</i>
*L'Engle, Madeleine	<i>Wind in the Door</i>
*L'Engle, Madeleine	<i>Wrinkle in Time</i>
Norton, Andre	<i>Android at Arms</i>
*Osborne, Mary Pope	<i>Midnight on the Moon</i>
Rector, Rebecca Kraft	<i>Tria and the Great Star Rescue</i>
Reeve, Philip	<i>Larklight, or, The Revenge of the White Spiders!</i>
Reisman, Michael	<i>Simon Bloom, the Gravity Keeper</i>
*Scieszka, Jon	<i>2095</i>
Sleator, William	<i>Marco's Millions</i>
*Slobodkin, Louis	<i>Spaceship Under the Apple Tree</i>
Slote, Alfred	<i>C.O.L.A.R. A Tale of Outerspace</i>
*Slote, Alfred	<i>Omega Station</i>
*Verne, Jules	<i>Journey to the Center of the Earth</i>
*Verne, Jules	<i>Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea</i>
Waugh, Sylvia	<i>Space Race</i>
*Wells, H. G.	<i>Invisible Man</i>
*Wells, H. G.	<i>War of the Worlds</i>

*Found in the Steppingstone Library, more are on the special "Shelf of the Month" in the library

Power Reading

The books on these lists are examples of good literature as selected by librarians. However, children develop at different rates of sensitivity and maturity, so we trust parents to decide whether a book is appropriate for their individual child.



Why is Sandy Blay here? Read Update: Capital Campaign on the next page and find out!



Emily Finkelstein practices her Winterfest presentation



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Many families and friends have donated to the Capital Campaign at this point, but we would like to highlight Steppingstone's Business Manager, Sandy Blay, who was the first to write her contribution check. When asked why, she said, "These kids need this school." Many of us were touched by her sentiment because she has no children enrolled at Steppingstone, and she is a relatively new member of the administrative staff.

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ISACS Visits Steppingstone

On Wednesday, Keith Shahan, new Executive Director of ISACS (the Independent Schools Association of the Central States) made a vow to visit all the ISACS member schools in his first two years as Executive Director. This week, he began visiting Michigan schools and spent part of the morning getting to know Steppingstone.

Head of School, Kiyo Morse, shared the founding and history as well as information about the program and plans for the future. Mr. Shahan then toured the building and was able to get a sense of how well equipped we were for computer programming, art, music and science. The SMART lab is always a high point of the equipment we own.

One of the ideas that Mr. Shahan shared was the possibility of offering need-based scholarships, starting perhaps with the PHS classroom. Kiyo, Keith and Tom Herbst had a brief discussion to explore the implementation of this possibility in the near future.

Mrs. Morse will be talking with Mr. Shahan at the ISACS Heads Conference in January, at which time she will also be attending a meeting of AIMS (Association of Independent Michigan Schools) Heads.



Steppingstone Head of School Kiyo Morse and ISACS Executive Director Keith Shahan

ADMINISTRATION

Head of School	Kiyo Morse
Assistant Head	Thomas Herbst
Admissions Director	Donna Coffin
Special Programs Director, & Office Manager	Sandra Blay
Business and Facilities Manager	

STAFF

General Assistant,	Jason Roder
IT Specialist	

FACULTY

Early Elementary	Carol Powell
Intermediate Elementary	Janelle Schultz
Upper Elementary	Linda Hoff
Pre High School,	Keiko Morse
Faculty Chair	
AIMS/TSC Representative	Carol Powell

INSTRUCTORS

Art	Mary Gage
Japanese	Mieko West
Spanish	Ana Maria Gonzalez
Mandarin Chinese	Hong Lin
Computer	Dr. Reef Morse
Extended Day	Mary Gage
Fencing	Jerzy Radz
Performing Arts	Kathy Nellett

SPARC EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

President	Jackie Robbins
Vice President	Tom Collins
Secretary	Susan Sheth
Treasurer	Sherry Kahn

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Vice-Chair	Jenifer Lampi
Sponsors & Program Ads	
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Admin Representative	Donna Coffin
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Acquisition Coordinator	Susan Sheth
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Printing and Publications	Tom Herbst
Immediate Past Chair	Wendy Mayer

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Trustee:	Richard Houdek
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Capital Campaign Chair	
Ex Officio:	David Jeshurun
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Ex Officio:	Kiyo Morse
Head of School	