



MARCH & APRIL 2024

The Albrook Almanac

Picasso: Hear and Now

In the Picasso room, we have been doing some mindful tasting. Lemons, limes, pineapples, olives, and hearts of palm are just a few of the things we have mindfully tasted. The children especially enjoyed seeing what a pineapple looks like before it is cut and how delicious it smells once it is cut! The teachers created "smelling work," including vanilla, Indian spices, and lemons.

During circle, we have been practicing our "peace poem" ritual. The children have learned how to be still and breathe slowly and deeply to be silent in the moment. The coveted jobs are turning off and on the overhead lights and peace candle. These jobs became so popular that we created a chart to ensure every child had a turn to do each job!

Miro: Hear and Now

In the Miro class we practice mindfulness by focusing on our breath: breathe in, breathe out. After doing this we often discuss what happens when we get frustrated or angry. We talk about how we can feel big emotions. When we take a breath, it makes the big emotion get a little bit smaller. Next, we take another breath, and the big emotion continues to shrink.

At the same time that we are acknowledging uncomfortable feelings, we want to remember that there are many things to feel good about. We asked the class, what they felt grateful for at that moment. Here were some responses: grateful for friends, circle time because we're all together, playing with my brother and sister, etc.

We were encouraged to see that most of the children were eager to share both their frustrations and what they were thankful for.

We will continue to breathe through all of our emotions, and we will also remember to include gratitude.

Upcoming Events

Monday, May 13

Spirit Day and final day for Albrook Pizza (Morning friends will dismiss at 12:15pm)

Sunday, May 12

Mother's Day

Tuesday, May 14

Final APA Meeting

Thursday, May 16

Elementary 5K Race
PAMBE Ghana fundraiser

Friday, May 17

Teacher Appreciation Luncheon
Early Dismissal

Monday, May 27

Memorial Day-School Closed



The Albrook School

361 Somerville Road • Basking Ridge, NJ 07920 • 908-580-0661 • www.albrookschool.org

Black History Month

To honor Black History Month, the Albrook classes chose an activity or reading to celebrate the influence and achievements of African Americans throughout American history.

In honor of Black History Month, the Stepping Stones students read the book *Saving the Day* about Garrett Morgan. He was an African American inventor who invented the traffic signal.

Mrs. Gujral joined the Miro and Van Gogh classes to celebrate Black History Month. She read the book: *We All Belong*, which celebrates our similarities and differences. She brought skin tone paints, and each child matched their skin tone and used it to create a classroom peace sign. We were left with a beautiful representation of the shades of our class.

The Matisse students read a book and discussed Martin Luther King.

The Homer Class read the story about George Washington Carver, an agricultural scientist and inventor. Then, we planted seeds, and we have been taking care of them and watching them grow.



Our elementary learning communities, both Lower and Upper Elementary, have been commemorating Black History Month with books, discussions, and activities related to famous black Americans. Some amazing books that were read, included: *Henry's Freedom Box*, *A True Story of the Underground Railroad*, *Trombone Shorty*, and *The Story of Ruby Bridges*. Students also enjoyed discussing *Influential Black Leaders of Day*: Stevie Wonder, Aretha Franklin, Barack Obama, Duke Ellington, Maya Angelou, Jackie Robinson, Gabby Douglas, George Washington Carver, Serena Williams, and Madam C. J Walker. Lastly, students discussed key historical events, such as segregation, the Civil Rights Movement, and Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

The Joy of Math

By Ms. Vazaios and Mrs. Marvi

"Children display a universal love of mathematics, which is par excellence the science of precision, order, and intelligence." - Dr. Maria Montessori.

Dr. Montessori and her contemporaries have created a vast array of hands-on materials that allow for joyous self-discovery in all math branches of study. We take great delight in how our class materials are designed to bridge a sensorial understanding, which then paves the way for a deep, abstract understanding of math that is unparalleled.

Introduction to Preschool

It is a tradition at Albrook that the Stepping Stones parents have an opportunity to attend an introduction to the preschool program. Many families gathered for a discussion about what to expect at the next level. We were able to share experiences and address individual questions. Additionally, the parents observed the various classes and witnessed the magic of the mixed-age group in action.

We had so much fun hosting everyone for Math Night on Thursday, March 7th! Observing a true love of mathematics in all classrooms was such a pleasure. We hope you had fun exploring a variety of math works with your child. Enjoy looking at all the wonderful pictures that capture the magic of the night and reading some commentary shared by students.

- Avi stated, “ I really loved doing the decimal board.”
- “Doing the geometric stick box was fun. I liked showing him the 7 triangles of reality”, commented Kian.
- “I liked the food and the math activities,” said Jackson.
- Abby remarked, “ I liked doing the stamp game with Grandma and Dad.”
- Amalia said, “It was nice to show our parents how we are progressing in math.”
- Mishti commented, “ It was fun to show what we are learning in class.”
- Angelina mentioned, “ It was exciting to share work that we were doing. It was fun to work with my dad. I got to make a truncated cube of the Archimedean Solids.”

If you wish to extend math further at home, feel free to take advantage of exploring these fun math educational digital resources:

[IXL](#), [PBS Math Games](#), [Cool Math Games](#), [Timeline of Math](#), [Math Origami](#), [Multiplication by Heart](#), [Tangrams](#), [Almanac of Interesting Numbers](#), [ABCYA Math Games](#), [Math Game Time](#), [Math Playground](#), [Hooda Math](#)



Celebrating Earth Day

Earth Day is a special day at Albrook. The students discuss the impact each one has on the health of our planet. Below is feedback from some classes and their approach to celebrating our planet Earth. To celebrate Earth Day this year, the older students from Upper Elementary joined the younger students from the Monet classroom for a leisurely nature walk. It was heartwarming to observe the older students gently take the hands of the toddlers and point out some of the wonders of our Children's Garden. Smelling the oregano and basil was a big hit, and there were lots of giggles when the toddlers expressed 'yuck'.

We then slowly walked around the labyrinth and listened to the sounds of nature and the quiet chatter of the beautiful interactions. We ended our celebration by singing Happy Birthday to the Earth. The Miro children did an experiment that involved the germination of a seed. The children choose between peas and beans. The friends observed their seeds developing roots. The children will transfer the seeds to their gardens at home. When they are ready, they will harvest them in the fall and enjoy their grown foods.

The Van Gogh class celebrated Earth Day by reading a book about Earth Day. They had a lesson on what items can go into the recycle container, the compost, and which items we repurpose to reuse in the classroom. The children then wore gloves and went to the soccer field and pool area to clean up any trash they found.

The Homer Class celebrated Earth Day by discovering different things in nature during our scavenger hunt.

In the Matisse class, we celebrated Earth Day on Wednesday, the 10th of April, with a guest speaker, Arnika's mom, who spoke to the children about the importance of recycling and how this is her occupation. She talked about Earth Day and then read the book *The Lorax* written by Dr. Seuss. She then showed items to be recycled. Mrs. Mastropierro showed how her mother-in-law made bags from plastic bags. Lastly, Arnika's mom used recycled bottles to make lanterns!

In the O'Keeffe class, we celebrated Earth Day by making paper bowls from recycled materials. This project will also double as a gift for Mother's Day.

The Stepping Stones classes read the *Earth Book* by Todd Parr. We went on a nature walk and collected objects from nature. We will make a group collage from our findings.



The Elementary Expanded Care students planted sunflower seeds for Earth Day. We used cardboard egg cartons as pots for the sunflower seeds. After the sunflowers grow, they will be gifts to go home with the students for Mother's Day.

STEAM Workshop

The Albrook staff had an In-service Day on March 15 in Albers Hall. This workshop was an LSC Professional Development Course directed by Liberty Science Center. The instructor hosted the program from 12:30-3:30 pm, focusing on integrating science investigations, engineering, and design thinking as the teachers explored developing students' creativity, communication, and problem-solving skills.

The elementary teachers felt that the presenter was very good and engaging. The activities were very appropriate for elementary children. The hands on element of the workshop was effective and fun for everyone. Both building a tower and creating a windmill were great ideas and options for our students.

The Albrook preschool teachers enjoyed an afternoon of learning about STEAM principles from a representative from the Liberty science center. It was fun to work with each team to complete the tasks given. It opened the curiosity of the child said the Van Gogh teachers. The O'Keeffe teachers felt that the workshop was a good reminder of how a child learns by having the ability to think outside the box and explore other techniques, while being creative and problem-solving during the workshop, we learn to work as a group and build various structures with limited materials. Our end results did not matter as it was a process of designing as a group rather than the final product.



Planetarium Trip

Smileworks Visits the Preschool Classes

Ms. Leah from Smileworks Pediatric Dentistry in Basking Ridge came to Albrook School to teach the preschool classes the healthy foods to eat, and how to brush and floss their teeth. The children especially enjoyed the oversized toothbrush!



The PreK2 children enjoyed the Raritan Community College planetarium field trip. They ate lunch in Albers Hall together and boarded a school bus to take them to the planetarium. When we got there, they put coins in a machine, and they saw how gravity pulls us down. They went on a scavenger hunt and then entered the auditorium for the Rocket Ride show. After the show, the bus brought them back to Albrook. When asked what their favorite part was, they said,

- Mathis- sitting on bouncy seats
- Rohm- being on the bus
- Sydney- watching the show on TV
- James - being in the rocket ship
- Claire- the talking sun
- Kaia- the planet show
- Lauren - on the school bus
- Brooklyn. Watching the show
- Isabelle. Seeing the unicorn constellation
- Ava- the show

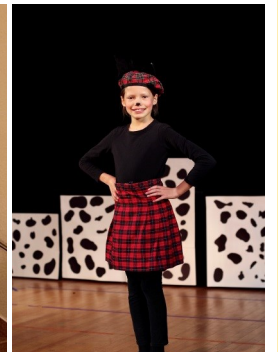
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- Ayden All of it
- Jaiden. Being with my friends
- Eleanor. The TV in the sky
- Jason The sun
- Vincenzo- Jupiter
- Ziggy. The talking sun
- Rachel. All of it.
- Lilith- the show

- Liam. The talking sun
- Miro. Being in the dark
- Lyla. The planets
- Rai. The moon rocks
- Asher. The talking sun.
- Amara- EVERYTHING!

Elementary Play 2024

On Friday, April 12th, the elementary community came together for Albrook’s annual musical theater production. This year, the students presented *101 Dalmatians*. The students prepared for their performance during their drama classes beginning in January. They then put everything together during “Performing Arts Week.” The students learned lines, songs, and choreography and also helped in the creation of scenery and costumes. Additionally, we had an excellent team of parents who spent multiple hours making large set pieces and making each costume and prop look perfect. Our elementary staff served as stage crew, making everything run smoothly



backstage, and we were also grateful to Mrs. Comperiat and Ms. Hoffmann who volunteered to be additional helpers behind the scenes. Everyone's hard work paid off as we watched all of the children shine on stage.

Open House

Different factors influence attendance at an Open House. The weather, for one. If the weather is nice, parents tend to seize that opportunity and forego the event, especially when they have worked long hours all week. The time change is another influencer. It throws us off a bit, and children's sleep patterns are affected. To make a long story short, we open our doors, the administrative team is ready, and we host whoever decides today is the day we want to find out more about that intriguing Montessori school on the beautiful property by the horse farm. It was a beautiful day at the March Open House, and there was a time change, but prospective parents still came. It was a slow start....but an hour into the event, everyone showed up at once! We had a great number of families interested in the Stepping Stones and preschool programs. Our team spent time with each family and responded to all their inquiries. When they departed, there were many happy faces, and it wasn't just the delicious homemade cookies served. We are delighted to report that half of the attendees have already applied. In the end, serious prospective parents usually find a way to join us. Once they do, they will be pleased with what they have learned from our passionate and dedicated staff!

Spring Event 2024

The Albrook Spring Event took place on March 22, 2024 at Hamilton Farm Golf Club and it was surely a night to remember! Thanks to the generosity of our incredible Albrook community, we raised \$50,000!

The evening was filled with tasty cocktails, passed champagne and appetizers and a delectable dinner display, featuring international cuisine stations. Our hearts and stomachs were very full! The band once again delivered hit after hit, keeping the dance floor rocking!

The stars of the evening were of course the amazing Art Projects created by our very talented children. Each one was truly symbolic, unique and beautiful. As a result and thanks to Mrs. Tarangul as auctioneer, the live auction was a remarkable success!

Soliciting donations for the silent auction was a labor of love, but it was very much worth every ounce of effort! We were simply amazed and touched at how giving the local businesses, parents, faculty, friends and family were. From luxury golf outings to meeting the Sheriff and Mayor to hand made American Doll outfits to pizza ovens to various one of a kind experiences locally and in NYC, we had something for everyone.

And who can forget the Priceless Gifts! Thank you to our creative teachers for organizing such special experiences for our children. From sunrise yoga to principal for the day, you've created ever lasting memories for them.



We hope the faculty enjoyed the “Grab Bag” gifts as well!

Team work makes the dream work and the Spring Event was certainly a testament to that! We are so grateful to all the volunteers who helped make the evening run so smoothly.

As we emphasized in our speeches, Albrook’s inclusivity and diversity are bar none and in our opinion, the best place for our children to embark on their educational and social journeys. The friends we have made, and our children have made, share the same values of acceptance and kindness to all. We hope the success of the evening and the funds raised will continue the Albrook legacy of “Hear and Now” for many generations to come.

Our deepest gratitude,
 Anisha Bhasin Mukherjee & Amanda Kaufman
 Co-chairs

Dance Caravan Club Winter 2024

Every club season, the highlight of the Albrook School Dance Caravan Club is the dance recital. Our Dancers’ family members gather to see the results of the effort and joy put in to each routine. All age groups have their own special performance and each child gives their best. The event is not only delightful, they are learning to work together as a team and to build coordination. These benefits paired with developing confidence through performing in front of an audience is an invaluable experience. Each child is beaming with excitement as their family members cheer them on.

Expanded Care and Stepping Stones Plus

The elementary and preschool expanded care and stepping stones plus program, enjoyed many things during spring break. The teachers created fun activities for the children. The weather was in our favor, so we hosted many projects outside. The children’s day mimicked a regular school day with continual learning in the morning and fun projects in the afternoon with lots of extra outside play. The students enjoyed cooking projects, decorating cookies, singing Happy

Birthday to Ms. Albers on her 95 birthday, finger sewing, painting vases, learning about worms and making edible dirt, making caterpillars, and many other art projects.

