

Media-Providence Friends School *Dragon Tales*

Summer 2013

Narratives of the Magic of MPFS

Going... Going... Green!

In May, scientists announced that Earth's CO2 levels passed 400 parts per million, a concentration not seen since the Pliocene epoch 3 million years ago. On the rise since the Industrial Revolution, levels had been relatively stable at 180-280 ppm throughout the prior 8,000 years of human civilization. The reality is, each time we turn on a light or take a car ride or plane trip, more carbon dioxide is added to the atmosphere.

Stewardship of the Earth has long been a central tenet of Quaker philosophy, which is why environmental education and sustainability have always been a part of MPFS' curriculum. At the heart of our program is teaching children that a better world (on many levels!) is possible. In recent years, the school's Green Committee has led the charge to reduce the school's environmental impact, engaging faculty and students in thinking and living sustainably:

On-site composting diverts biodegradable food waste from the trash stream and improves soil in the school's flower, butterfly and vegetable gardens. Plastic, glass, metal, cardboard, newsprint and colored paper are recycled through Media borough's single stream program, while all classroom scrap white paper is recycled through the school district's "Papertriever". This year, there's a little less scrap as our one-to-one iPad program's enabled T. Daryl to experiment with paperless lab submissions in the middle school. And, the entire school has been concertedly

conserving energy by turning out classroom lights when not needed. Since 2009, this endeavor has reduced electricity consumption by 5%.



The latest step to improve campus sustainability will cut usage by a further 6% annually: a 34-panel solar array which generates about 11,000 kilowatt hours of energy per year. In the 6 months since officially "throwing the switch", the panels have helped MPFS trim its carbon footprint by 4 tons. More importantly, the rooftop array, a collaboration with Media Friends Meeting, has been a visible daily reminder to the entire school community about the importance of living sustainably.

In December, students eagerly tracked the installation of the 8.84 kW photovoltaic system from recess to recess, watching each panel being put into place. Open Sky Energy Systems

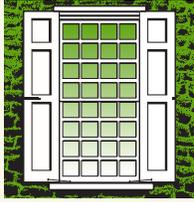
principals Michael Matotek and Joe Coyle also spent a day with classes around school explaining the benefits of renewable energy and demonstrating how solar panels convert energy from the sun into energy MPFS can use to power lights, SmartBoards, computers and iPads.

"For us, ultimately the return on investment isn't so much measured in dollars saved, but by the fact that we've been able to live out our values," says Head of School, Earl Sissell. "Our Quaker ethos compels us to be stewards of the Earth, and now, MPFS has its own power plant... literally a 'living laboratory' in which students can study first-hand the impact of using renewable energy."

The array will supply more than a quarter of the energy used within MPFS' middle school/gymnasium complex each year. Over its 30-year life time, energy savings will equal the amount of carbon sequestered by 210 acres of forest. Classes are able to monitor the daily, weekly, monthly and cumulative energy generated by the array via a live web feed (you can see it too at: <https://enlighten.enphaseenergy.com/public/systems/WY3c140886>)

Media Meeting solar partner and MPFS parent Greta Hudak aptly remarked, "This project produced sustainable alternative energy, but also alternative thinking infused with enthusiasm, and increased understanding about how we make a difference through our energy choices."

Indeed, we think "Green" suits us. It reflects the vibrant inner optimism we seek to instill in students.



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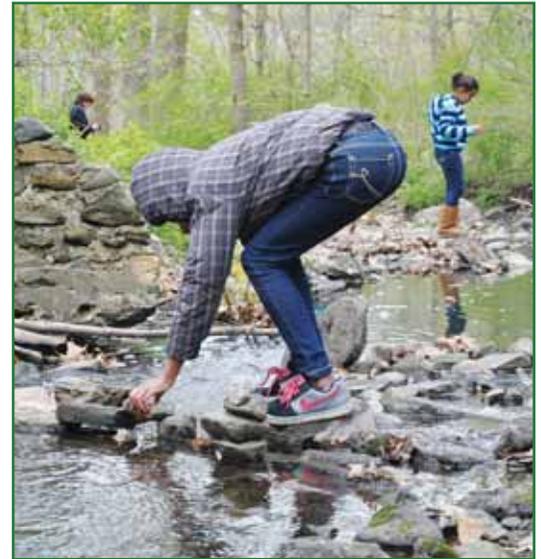
Media-Providence Friends School is a PreK-8 Quaker day school which provides a rich educational experience where academic challenge is combined with the teaching of values.

 Printed using soy inks on recycled paper.

Teaching Sustainability

At MPFS, teaching sustainability involves providing opportunities for students to synthesize learning and engage in creative agency.

In PreK-4, students “tour” the Earth’s unique landscapes via books and magazines as a launching point for thinking about how to help preserve its beauty. At this young age, helping involves simple but important steps like bringing trash-free lunches, using silverware and reusable cups in the classroom, and coloring on scrap paper. The concept of re-use even extends to the lowly crayon stub when students create “new and improved” multi-colored crayons by melting bits that accumulate throughout the year!



1st Graders use all of their senses as they joyously explore the pond, stream and woodland ecosystems of Glen Providence Park amidst Fall’s brisk breezes, Winter’s snowfall, and Spring’s showers. There, investigations into the water cycle (condensation, precipitation, evaporation) come alive, reinforcing for students that all the water that we have on the planet is all the water we have, and fostering awareness of the need to conserve and protect our valuable resources.

Demonstrating how a “better world” begins with their imaginations, this Winter, 4th Graders were inspired to participate in Science World magazine’s “Protect the Planet” contest. The resulting cross-disciplinary collaboration had them researching for their inventions in Science, designing prototypes in Art, and writing persuasive essays in Language Arts. Among their ideas: Forever Paper, technology which perpetually re-uses ordinary paper with the help of a hand-cranked graphite-attracting electrical current, and Eco Parking, which employs leaf-shaped solar array “umbrellas” to charge electric cars in public parking lots.

As part of their year-long immersion in Environmental Science, 6th Graders visited Friends Center in Philadelphia, the first LEED platinum certified restoration in the nation. There they saw how a green roof, solar panels, geothermal wells, rain-water collection cisterns and day-lighting transformed this now fossil-fuel-free Quaker institution. Afterwards, they were moved to write letters to corporations advocating the adoption of green building technologies to improve the environment and model corporate responsibility.

As they observe, interact, question and connect learning with life, students begin to appreciate that we are not isolated entities. Inextricably interconnected with our environment, we all play a part in sustaining our planet!

Profiles in Philanthropy: Backstory to the Future

When breakfasting with longtime supporter Mary Ann Restall, MPFS Director of Development Cynthia McGoff knew exactly what Mary Ann would order: one egg, toast, crisp bacon, and coffee. It was her “usual.” Equally predictable would be Mary Ann’s delightful company and the gracious philanthropy to which she and her late husband Paul were so committed. Mary Ann died on February 20, 2011, and MPFS lost a dear friend.

Yet, Mary Ann still managed to surprise us. As noted in the last issue of Dragon Tales, in June 2011, MPFS received a \$50,000 bequest to the school’s endowment from her estate. We were tremendously touched by and most grateful for this unexpected gift. Her children -- Rick Restall, Mary Lou Broughton, and Bob Restall -- included a note with the contribution, part of which read: “Mary Ann Restall believed that education was the key to success. Therefore, as a final tribute to your school and to honor her husband Paul’s Quaker affiliation, she has [given MPFS] the enclosed gift.”

As it turns out, the term “final” was a bit of a misnomer. Six months later, we received a lovely holiday card from Rick Restall noting: “My parents thought highly of your school and the excellent service you provide the community. As such, please accept this donation on their behalf. Cheers.”

Cheers, indeed. Enclosed was a check for \$200,000, the largest single donation received in MPFS’ 136-year existence! After reaching out to Rick in deep gratitude and appreciation, we uncovered a tale of thoughtful generosity that is truly priceless.

Upon Mary Ann’s death, the funds from her Unitrust were to go to The Williamson Free School of Mechanical Trades. Paul, a former Williamson Trustee, and Mary Ann were stalwart supporters of the trade school. However, based on his many conversations with his mother, Rick truly believed that Mary Ann also intended to bequeath an additional gift to MPFS. So, as Rick considered intervening on MPFS’s behalf, he began a due diligence review of our school, checking out our property, financials, and reputation.

Deciding that MPFS made the grade, Rick asked for and received the blessings of his co-executor siblings, and then approached Williamson’s then-President Guy Gardner to explain his heartfelt belief that Mary Ann would have wanted a portion of the Unitrust to come to MPFS.

President Gardner was very willing to consider Rick’s request and to present it to the Williamson Board of Trustees. Williamson’s Board approved and we received a truly incredible gift.

The MPFS Board of Trustees then had the wonderful job of allocating the funds. The \$200,000 gift was unrestricted and the Restall family was clear that it was to be used however the school deemed most beneficial.

Amid a year-long strategic planning initiative, the Board ultimately decided to direct \$100,000 to the MPFS’ endowment, which supports the long-term sustainability of the school and grows over time, providing funds for academic programs, financial aid, capital needs, faculty salaries, and

professional development for years to come. Another \$50,000 was allocated to additional Development office support for a two-year period to build alumni, planned giving, and donor programs, increase Annual Giving, and grow endowment – again with long-term sustainability in mind. The final \$50,000 will supplement funds contributed by friends and families at the 2013 Spring Auction to complete vital gym improvements this summer that will benefit students throughout the school for decades ahead.

“In allocating this extraordinary gift to meet both the short- and long-term strategic needs of the school, the Board has done an exceptional job carrying out its mission for the benefit of the school as it is today and into the future,” attests Head of School Earl Sissell.

So, a toast -- and perhaps strip of crisp bacon -- to the Restall family (and Williamson), from whom we have received so much.

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Our community first learned about the gym’s new maple floor at this year’s Auction.

Alumni News

The Class of 2008 are college co-eds!

Andy Aguilar is double majoring in Diplomacy & International Relations and Modern Languages at Seton Hall University; **Kyle Vincent-Berrong** is in the Community College of Philadelphia's Honors Program considering majoring in Communications; **D.J. Bozentka** had a great first year at High Point University majoring in Business and minoring in Computer Science; **David Gathright's** enrolled at West Chester University; **Robyn Himmelstein** is studying Psychology at Haverford College; **Tessa Kuhn** is majoring in Theatre at York University in Ontario; **Kelsey Miller** is attending Susquehanna University, contemplating International Studies; **Asia Scott** is a Biology major at Immaculata University; and, **Yassmin Zahran** is a Biology/Clinical Lab Studies major at Neumann University.



Friends Select Cum Laude Society inductee **Allison Brunner** interned in T. Betty's class this Spring.

Carter Ford wrote, directed and performed in his original play Love at First Site, just another social marketing musical whose opening number was performed at the National Thespian Festival.

Woodlynde basketball guard/newspaper staffer **Alex Roberts** interned at MPFS for her senior project.

Aaron Zack was very involved in Penncrest's marching band, orchestra and pit orchestra, and worked at Valley Forge National Park with the National Youth Corps for the last 3 summers.

Isabel Barrett plays for Woodlynde's softball team, runs track, is on the honor roll, yearbook and journalism staff, and loves composing music on her computer.

Isabella Botak's work in a children's orphanage/hospice in China last summer inspired interest in nursing. Still playing guitar, she's an honor student and DVFS' service committee president.

Kate Bozentka plays doubles on Strath Haven's tennis team and flute in the band. A National Arts Honor Society inductee, next year she'll be yearbook editor.

This year, Friends Central's **Noah Gilford** traveled to Wallops Island's Marine Science Consortium

for Advanced Bio, performed in Great Expectations and Urinetown, and ran track.

Co-captain of the Interboro cross country and track teams, **Jordan Harris** took first in the Del Val meet mile run. 15th in his class, he's a National Honor Society and Spanish Club member.

Billy Haviland plays soccer, is a Quaker Leadership Program member and won 2 track medals for Westtown at states this year. He'll travel to the '14 Paralympics in Russia for his Senior Project.

Molly Marcus sings for the All-State Women's Choir, volunteers at a hospice, had a lead in Bye Bye Birdie, and is a member of Wilmington Friends' Apple Core computer tech/service group.

Haverford honor roll-ee

Peter Subramanian is in the choir and a string ensemble violinist. He toured Norway with the Keystone State Boys Choir last June.

Penncrest soccer and track participant **Arbour Guthrie** performed the lead in Swarthmore Ballet's production of The Firebird this Spring.

International Thespian Society member **Olivia Jarrell** directed in Penncrest's Readers Theater, had a lead in Crimes of the Heart, and travels to Tanzania, Africa for service-learning this Summer.

Thespian/soccer player **Sam Dainton** was inducted into the Spanish Honor

Society at Archmere Academy, having achieved the 3rd highest score in the state on the National Spanish Exam.

Eli Linvill and the magnetic levitation train he built (rebuilt, and rebuilt!) represented Penncrest, 1 of 2 PA high schools, at the National Science Olympiad. His team placed 14th out of 60.

Noah Marcolongo has been participating in cross country, robotics and math clubs at Archmere Academy and volunteers at a soup kitchen in Kensington as well.

Westtown's **Haley Peterson** was awarded a scholarship for academic excellence, exhibited a mono-print series at UC-Boulder, and was elected Prefect on the junior girls' dorm.

Katie Botak plays varsity softball at Abington Friends where she enjoys art and theatre and being in a community that reminds her of MPFS.

Spanish Club member **Jacob Harris** played for Interboro's soccer and track teams and recently received a bronze medal for the 330 intermediate hurdles in the novice meet.

Ridley honor student **Alex Mitchell** represented the school at the Central League Creative Writing Competition and joins the Philadelphia Project doing home improvements this summer.

Anna Musewicz played classical guitar in 2 instrumental concerts and had her first piano recital at the PALCS' Center for Fine & Performing Arts.

Next Stop, The World

Class “overnights” are rights of passage, experiences as eagerly anticipated prior to their occurrence as fondly remembered afterwards. Curriculum-driven, they extend classroom learning (frequently Environmental Science) and are intentionally designed to build community and foster independence. Beginning with the 2nd Grade Sleepover at school, each year expectations of students incrementally increase, helping to progressively prepare them for life!

Ashland Nature Center

The rolling piedmont of Delaware’s “DuPont country” is a haven for 3rd Grade naturalists. With pond, stream and bog habitats, geology digs and bay studies, this 2 day-1 night adventure introduces the excitement and learning of overnights.

Silver Lake Nature Center

Whether maple sugaring, identifying trees or tracking animals, 4th Graders build resiliency as they live communally for 3 days and 2 nights in this Bucks County coastal plains preserve.



Echo Hill Outdoor School

For 4 days and 3 nights, 5th Graders study Chesapeake ecology, slog through neck deep swamp mud, challenge themselves on ropes courses, sleep in platform tents, and meet peers from other Mid-Atlantic region schools.



Bear Creek Camp

Early in the school year, this camping overnight welcomes 6th graders into the middle school fold. Hikes, high and low ropes, campfires and cooperative games nurture camaraderie.



French Creek State Park

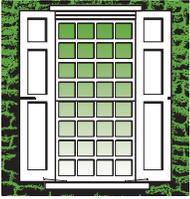
Centered on building community and independence, this cabin camping trip had 7th Graders cooking their own meals outdoors, hiking, identifying plants, surveying lake health and fishing.



New Mexico

8th Graders’ culminating trip takes them far from home to experience different histories, geography and cultural contexts. Recently, it’s been 8 days in New Mexico at Georgia O’Keefe’ Ghost Ranch, where they explore an active paleontology site, perform service, hike and horseback-ride, white-water raft, complete high ropes challenges, and visit ancient cliff dwellings.





Media - Providence Friends School

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Meet Flat Dazzle!



Flat Dazzle is MPFS' spin on elementary literary sensation Flat Stanley who travels the world via US Mail and is photographed in interesting places. This pint-sized version of our school mascot is your very own to cut out and include in photos whenever you travel or do something fun or exciting. Whether you're traveling down the block to the park or half way around the world, take our friendly little green dragon along and snap a shot of him and you next to any likely looking landmark. Be sure to email us your photos* to display in our website's Flat Dazzle photo gallery. Send them as JPEGs to info@fox.mpfs.org letting us know where you are and who's in the photo with you!

Let the snapping commence!

*When taking photos to submit to the online photo gallery, be sure to have your digital camera set to the highest quality setting. Email photos in JPEG format to info@fox.mpfs.org.

