



Maury at the Market 2014 is Almost Here!

by Elsa Huxley

Hope you've got your calendar marked for **Saturday, March 22 from 7-10pm** at Eastern Market! Tickets are on sale now at www.mauryatthemarket.org. Including food and drink, the tickets are \$40 in advance and \$45 at the door. Go to the website to view our fabulous items as they enter the auction catalog and a list of our generous sponsors.

Featuring food from Nando's, dessert from Capitol Hill Cake Mom, open wine and beer bar from the Argonaut and the Wine Institute, this adults-only lively evening features a raffle, silent auction, live auction, Schneider's wine cork pull, photo booth, tons of great items and experiences to win!

This is a parent-run event and our school's biggest annual fundraiser. Last year we raised over \$70,000 and after our (minimal) expenses it all goes to power the PTA's discretionary funds. This money covers aides' paychecks and classroom resources.

If you can help with raffle ticket sales in your office or morning lobby ticket sales over the next few weeks please email elsa@elsahuxley.com. Sheets with staffing

volunteer slots will go up in the lobby soon. Please sign up for a shift - the auction only works because the Maury parent body makes it happen.



Maury at the Market

March 22, 2014 | 7-10pm | Eastern Market North Hall

Along those lines, we are seeking the next chairs for the Fundraising Committee. Linda and I finish our commitment at the end of this school year. Please email me or Linda (lindabsamuel@yahoo.com) if you have an interest in taking on this fun and rewarding role for Maury.

Maury Family Traditions Night on March 6th!

It's time to think about which family tradition you would like to highlight at our 3rd annual Maury Family Traditions Night. Many families highlight traditions from a heritage perspective. They include traditional clothing, food, and more. We would like to expand our event to also include a greater variety of traditions. For example, does your family have an annual family reunion? How about an annual trip to a special place for your family? Does your family have a special holiday meal? Do you have a family storyteller? All of our families have wonderful traditions. Please consider sharing on March 6.



March 2014

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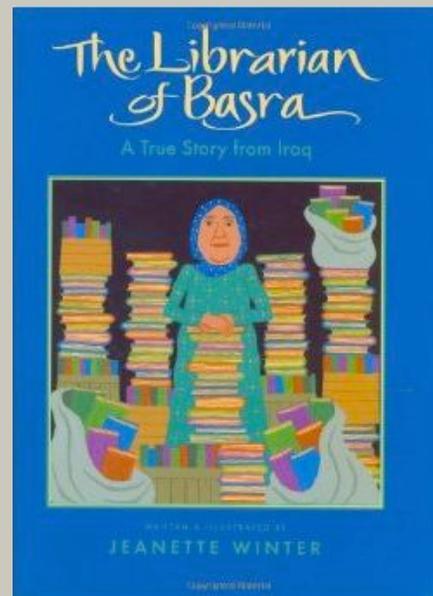
Principal's Book of the Month:

The Librarian of Basra :A True Story from Iraq

by Jeanette Winter

Alia Muhammad Baker is a librarian in Basra, Iraq. For fourteen years, her library has been a meeting place for those who love books. Until now. Now war has come, and Alia fears that the library--along with the thirty thousand books within it--will be destroyed forever.

In a war-stricken country where civilians--especially women--have little power, this true story about a librarian's struggle to save her community's priceless collection of books reminds us all how, throughout the world, the love of literature and the respect for knowledge know no boundaries.



Library Corner

By Ms. Sweeney

February 5th was Digital Learning Day, a day dedicated to integrating digital learning into the classroom. The Maury library was buzzing all day with amazing activities. Pre-K and K students checked out BookFlix, available through the DC Public Library website. After reading some favorite books, we watched the BookFlix version of related books. BookFlix is available at home through the DCPL website--all you need is a library card.

First graders talked about using the Internet to find information, then checked out an author's website to learn more about a book we'd read. After reading Cinders by Jan Brett, we learned where she got her inspiration for the story and the gorgeous illustrations.

Finally, 4th grade had an amazing time connecting with a class of 4th graders from Leckie Elementary in Southeast. When students entered the library, they were given 20 minutes to research a famous African American in history and write three clues to the person's identity. Using Google Hangout, Maury students provided their clues to Leckie students (and vice versa) and the students tried to guess the person being described. It was an amazing experience, and a great celebration of digital learning.



Coming Soon: Maury Vegetable Garden

by Joe Ludes

Maury's newly cut vegetable garden along 13th st NE has sat lifeless all through the winter, but inside school walls the Garden Club has been learning and planning to launch the school's first edible garden in the spring. The club has learned about vegetable plant families and tasted many vegetables from each family; they have learned about developing healthy soils and have nourished worm compost to add to the garden, and they have recently begun planning the planting calendar for the year. If all goes according to plan, you should start to see the garden come to life in April with beans, potatoes, kale, carrots, strawberries, and a variety of herbs. The club will also be decorating the area with signs explaining what is growing.

Once established, the garden will become an area to be used by the entire school for scientific exploration and learning healthy habits. Looking to the future, the club is interested in further building fertile soil and experimenting with soil building methods; increasing the school's composting operations; planting additional perennial fruit plants like blueberries and currants, and organizing gardening/cooking celebrations to share their hard work with the entire community. The club meets every Friday at 12:05 in Ms. Ford's classroom and will be coordinating with the School Improvement Committee in the spring to organize garden "weekend work days" for Maury families. Please contact Joe Ludes (mark.ludes@dc.gov) if you have any questions or would like to get involved.



Little Cougar Corner

Kindergarten Sneak Peek!

We invite all PreK3 and PreK4 to learn more about Maury's kindergarten program. Please join us for a Sneak Peek, which provides a preview of what's ahead for your little Cougar Cub.

Kindergarten SNEAK PEEK on **Friday, March 7**

9:15-10:25 Class visits

10:30-11:00 Q&A with teachers

A Journey Through Time

On Friday, February 7th, our Cubs enjoyed participating in a Maury-wide Celebration of African American Heritage. Our little ones spent the morning learning African dance moves, making freedom quilts, tasting new foods, hearing great stories, and coloring masks. They all had so much fun that they were exhausted by the time they returned to their classrooms! Thanks to all the Maury teachers and staff who gave our kids a great experience

Maury Advances to the Scripps National Spelling Bee

By Michelle Phipps-Evans

Fourth grader Milo Shea and fifth grader Isaac Smoker spelled their way to the top six spots in the local spelling bee competition on Feb. 25, which leads to the regional competition on NBC 4 in March.

Each boy has a shot at representing the DC area, and becoming the ultimate top speller at the 87th Scripps National Spelling Bee competition at the Gaylord National in Oxon Hill, Md., in May, which will be aired live on ESPN. Besides Milo and Isaac, fourth grader, Isabel Zaring also represented Maury, and placed within the top nine spellers. Only six can advance to the next level.

Representing Maury at the DC3 cluster spelling bee this spring are Milo, Isaac and Isabel plus third graders Ethan Williams, who placed first in the school-wide bee, and Kevin Anderson. (Note: Third graders aren't eligible to compete in Scripps.)

Maury's school-wide bee was hosted Jan. 22, when about 26 spellers from grades 3 to 5 competed to represent Maury at Scripps and at the DC3 cluster bee. Since early January, all the spellers have been working with a parent volunteer spelling coach, who has been assisting them with spelling tips. All spellers advancing further will continue to work with the school's instructional coach, Norah Rabiah, and the parent volunteer.

The children who represented their classrooms in the school-wide bee in January include the following:

Ms. Scott: Bo Johnson, Kevin Anderson, Jacob Murphy, Cooper Davenport, Ethan Williams, Daniel Floyd

Ms. Donnelly: Malcolm Douglas, Hazel Wartchow, Jala Lee, Cydney Taylor, Vicente Modesto, Talan Manago

Ms. Duckett: Vivian Dougherty, Isabel Zaring, Milo Shea, Samantha Garcia, Ne'vaeh Alston

Ms. George: Stella Drager, Taleyah Evans, Caden Kowalski, Janiya Prescott, and David Clayton

Ms. Vaugeois: Marquette Ellis, Isaac Smoker, Gabby Giannelli, Shaun Walton



Maury Elementary: In the Spotlight

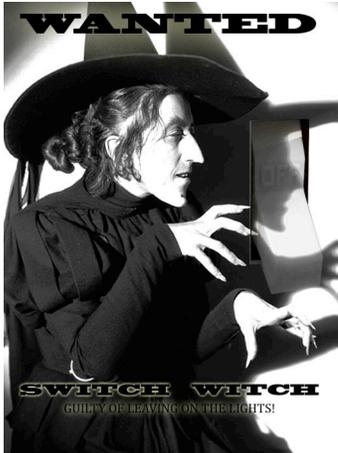
by Jamie Donovan

Over the last four weeks, organizers of the DC Green Schools Challenge have visited a number of our schools participating in the competition and have consistently been impressed by the enthusiasm and ingenuity of our students and the commitment of our faculty green team leaders. This is a busy time of year for our students and teachers and there are plenty of good reasons for schools to focus their efforts on other important issues. Yet, at school after school, we've seen just the opposite: teachers and students enthusiastically coming together to volunteer their free time to champion energy savings at their schools.

This week, we'd like to recognize Ms. Ford and the students of Maury elementary for their hard work and commitment.

I visited Maury Elementary School about two weeks ago with mentors from the local design firm Westlake Reed Leskosky to teach Ms. Ford's students about energy: why it's important, why it's important to consume less and ways we can save energy at school and at home.

The mentors led a 20 minute age-appropriate lesson plan they personally created on energy and conservation. While I find energy efficiency and building operations truly fascinating, our mentors realized second graders—and non-energy nerds, in general—may need a little more encouragement. So they came up with an energy audit that challenged students to find “energy monsters” in their school.



The Switch Witch

What is an energy monster? Well, there is the Switch Witch, who enters a room when the lights are left on. To keep her away, we turn lights off when we leave a classroom. There is also “Vampire Load,” who sucks energy when electronics are left on and plugged in after class is over. Then there is “Frozenstein,” who enters through open doors and windows, and “Scorchzilla,” who comes alive when the building is overheated.

If energy efficiency can be boring, “energy monsters” are decidedly not boring, at least if we are to judge by the students’ behavior during the energy audit. We visited two unoccupied classrooms during recess. The students searched high and low in excitement to weed out the energy monsters, regularly calling out that they had saved us from the “Switch Witch” or “Vampire Load.” In one classroom alone, the students identified 14 energy-saving measures!

The audit, however, is just the first step of identifying opportunities to save energy. The hard part is the implementation. It requires time, commitment and the collective action of teachers, students, the principal and facilities staff. And Maury has shown that it is up to the challenge.

Led by Ms. Ford, the school has implemented a number of measures that deserve attention, including:

- Delamping: The green team has unscrewed half of its overhead lights in selected classrooms.
- Turning down the heat: In classrooms with thermostats, teachers are turning down the heat.
- Reducing plug load: Teachers are now unplugging and powering down all electronics in classrooms.
- Daylighting: To eliminate unnecessary lighting, teachers and students have taped off sensor lights in the cubbies and those “extra” lights in classrooms.

The Maury green team, Ms. Ford and the challenge mentors have gone all in for the competition. They're engaged, curious and committed to reducing their consumption. Yet for all their work, for all their commitment and dedication, Maury is only now realizing energy savings. In fact, they have been in the red for most the competition. This is illustrative of the complexities of building performance and energy consumption. A number of factors—many, in fact— determine how much electricity a building consumes, such as its design, its age, its mechanical operations, outdoor temperature and a host of other factors. We try to account for as many of these factors as science. It's easy to get discouraged and lose momentum when hard work isn't showing up in the results. But Maury has continued to push its conservation plan off: it's now in the green.



MauryElementary.com



Ms. Ford and a group of second graders conduct an energy audit during lunch. In one classroom alone, they identified 14 energy saving opportunities!

DCCAS Testing

by Heather Hairston

Not everyone enjoys taking test. In fact, most people don't. Test anxiety, worrying about scores and stress associated with doing well impacts everyone, even at the elementary level. What we do know is that tests are important and they aren't going anywhere in the near future.

Formal assessments help school districts and teachers evaluate student needs and their progress. They help students gauge his or her own level of mastery, and provide the opportunity for parents to monitor his or her child's progress.

All DCPS students in Grades 3-8 and Grade 10 are required to take the DCCAS. You may notice that this is a change from previous years. This year 2nd grade students will not participating in the DC CAS.

We want to make sure that all of our families know how to support their children up to and through testing. Here are some tips and important information, which was shared at our DC CAS Night last month.

When does the DC CAS take place?

The first week of testing begins **Tuesday, April 1 – Friday, April 4th**. During this time students in Grades 3-5 will complete the Reading and Math portion of the test. Make up tests will take place in the afternoon for students who miss testing or arrive tardy to school. **Week 2 of testing begins Monday, April 7**. During this week students in Grade 4 will complete the Composition test. Students in Grade 5 will take the Science and Health tests.

What are the components of the test for each grade?

3rd Grade – Reading and Math

4th Grade – Reading and Math, Composition

5th Grade – Reading and Math, Science, Health

Maury families - We need your help.

- Mark test dates on your home calendar and remind your child of these dates as well.
- Do not schedule appointments on testing days. If you have previously scheduled appointments on testing days, try to change the appointments to a non-testing day.
- Discuss the test in a positive way with your child.
- Be sure that your child is well rested and eats a healthy breakfast each testing day.
- Be sure that your child arrives at school on time – no later than 8:45. Testing begins promptly at 9:15 each morning. Students who arrive late will not be allowed to test with their class.
- Encourage your child to relax and do the best work possible.
- Wish your child good luck each morning of the test. Tell your child that he/she is special and that you believe in him/her!
- Remind your child the test is important. Encourage him/her to do his/her best.
- If your child is too ill to attend, please call the school office.

Wondering how else you can support?

1. Review your child's homework with him/her. All of the work we send home is an important review of the school day.
2. Make sure your child is reading at home EVERY NIGHT.
3. Ask your child's teacher to send home additional practice materials.
4. Keep playing First in Math!



Ashoka Information Session on March 20th

Dear Maury Families,

I am writing to you about a really exciting project.

As you may know, Ashoka recently selected our school as a “Changemaker School”. (www.ashoka.org) In a world, where the jobs of tomorrow do not exist today for young people to thrive in a world where change is the only constant, Ashoka believes students need to master the critical skills of empathy, teamwork, leadership and problem solving/entrepreneurship.

Ashoka’s Youth Venture (www.youthventure.org) has been working on understanding what best practices/belief systems parents of young Changemakers practice to support their children. They had multiple conversations with parents and social entrepreneurs to see if there is a pattern, key principles, or practices that can be shared and disseminated. From those conversations they identified 3 key principles, which seed the potential of greatness in children.

Empathy – Leadership - Team Building

What does this mean for Maury? For one thing, Ashoka is interested in working with parents because you are your children’s first and most important teachers. To that end, Ashoka is looking to pilot parenting discussion groups across the country to focus on these topics. The idea is for a small group of parents to meet weekly for an hour and a half (for five weeks, so a seven and a half hour commitment total) to talk about parenting challenges and how parents can best teach their children the skills of empathy, leadership and team building.

A team from Ashoka will be here for an information session at the PTA meeting on March 20, 2014. We will conduct usual PTA business from 6:00-6:20 and the session on Parenting Changemakers will begin at 6:20. The meeting will be in the multi-purpose room. Childcare with Polite Piggy will be provided by the PTA. Pizza and drinks will be for sale.

See you on the 20th!

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ASHOKA INNOVATORS FOR THE PUBLIC



Upcoming Events

- March 6:** Maury Traditions Night @ 6-8pm
- March 7:** Kindergarten SNEAK PEEK @ 9:15 to 11am
- March 13:** Maury Loves Disco @ 6pm
- March 17:** Annual Pinewood Derby @ 6:30 - 8pm
- March 19:** ANET4 Testing - Reading Grades 2-5
- March 20:** ANET4 Testing - Math Grades 2-5
- March 20 :** PTA Meeting @ 6-7pm
- March 22:** Maury at the Market 7-10pm @ Eastern Market
- March 24 - 28:** DCCAS Spirit Week
- March 27:** Mathademics @ 6pm
- March 28:** Record Keeping Day (Note: now a full day of school as this is a snow make-up day)
- April 1-4:** Week 1 of DCCAS Testing for grades 3-5



Active Maury DonorsChoose.org Projects

Book Project

– Ms. George (4th Grade)

My students have about thirty minutes of independent reading time every day and they like to try out different types of texts. I know they would love to have new magazines coming in every week. They would practice their nonfiction reading skills and strategies while learning recent news and information.

These subscriptions would help my students get more interested during independent reading time. Please support this project if you can and help out my students. Support kids literacy!(Total cost = \$587)

To donate or see latest active Maury projects to to: <http://www.donorschoose.org/school/maury-elementary-school/28253/?active=true>

