



1227 CR 25, Canton, NY 13617
(315)379-9474
steve@littleriverschool.org
www.littleriverschool.org

LITTLE RIVER COMMUNITY SCHOOL

Little River News

We Need Your Help to Grow our School

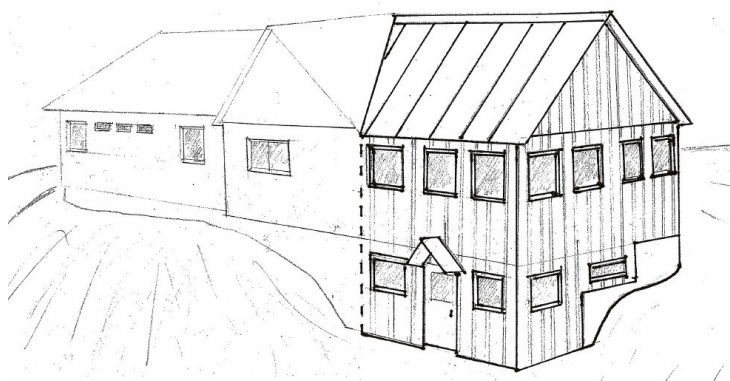
Little River has experienced tremendous growth this past year. After many years of slow and steady growth, our enrollment jumped nearly fifty percent from 23 students at the start of last year to 34 this year. Our three-room school house is completely full and we have had to turn away twenty families that have called in the last few months. As someone dedicated to working with students and providing educational choices and options, it is really difficult to tell these

families that we can't help.

Our vision is to put an addition on the building to increase the space we have for our students, and to add a new classroom to enroll new students. We

currently have three full-time teachers and a part-time biology teacher. With the addition, we would hire a fourth full-time teacher and a five hour per week administrative

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Sketch of proposed addition

Little River Travels to Puerto Rico

The International Democratic Educational Conference (IDEC), attended by over 900 people from 24 countries, was held last week in Caguas, Puerto Rico. We were there with seven students, ages to 12 to 15,

and two teachers. We spent a week in Puerto Rico attending the IDEC, and traveling to San Juan and the island of Culebra.

In preparation for our trip, the students held a debate on the theme of statehood for Puerto Rico.

On our travels we found first hand information to inform this discussion.

Our students have been studying Spanish and had plenty of opportunities to practice the language as we met students from

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- 8:1 Student/Teacher Ratio
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Big, Bold, Colorful Art

The title describes the Middles Room perfectly. The first thing everyone notices upon entering is the beautiful collage of collective art projects plastered to the walls. We have actually had pieces taped to the window for lack of wall space. The Middles love art class with all of its freedoms, color, real Bristol paper and an unending collection of media. They have



Inkblot by Ana Williams-Bergen

particularly embraced the gauche water color paints and oil pastels, hence the really bright, popping color on our walls.

Creativity has center stage at Little River.

expression kids are able to tap into the essential part of themselves that make them the kids they are. Little River celebrates each child with all their talents, strengths and challenges. Every child recognizes that on some level and feels entirely comfortable to be themselves.

By Maria Corse

Through free

Little River Senior and Graduate Awarded Honors

Heron Hetzler, a Little River graduating senior, was just awarded the Scholarship of Academic Excellence. The New York State Board of Regents awarded Heron \$1500 a year for four years to attend the college of her choice. She will be graduating from Little River in May. She is waiting to hear from several colleges before making her choice of schools. Congratulations Heron for your accomplishments!

Maddy Stevens, a 2011 Little River graduate, has been selected as the winner of a National Merit Scholarship.

"Heron Hetzler, a Little River graduating senior, was just awarded the Scholarship of Academic Excellence."

The National Merit Scholarship Corporation uses the PSAT/NMSQT as the initial screen of over 1.5 million program entrants. About 50,000 qualify for recognition. Of those, only about 8,200 receive the prestigious Merit Scholarship award.

Maddy will be awarded a \$2500 scholarship. She is currently attending Bennington College in Bennington, Vermont.

Little River Travels to Puerto Rico (Continued from page 1)

alternative schools in Puerto Rico whose primary language is Spanish. Our students expressed so much excitement after their first encounter using the language.

The conference was an incredible experience. We met students and teachers from other alternative schools and learned about the benefits of a democratic education from other viewpoints around the world. Most of the workshops were conducted in Spanish or

English with simultaneous translation on headsets. It is clear that the democratic education movement is alive and growing.

We also



At the airport and ready to go.

traveled by ferry to the small island of Culebra for a two day adventure. Culebra is a tropical paradise with beautiful beaches, coral reefs and protected wildlife refuges. The people of this island have special commitment to protect this precious environment.

This was an unforgettable experience in another culture, in a beautiful place.

Students Lead Morning Meetings

Every Monday and Thursday morning, all of the students at LRCS get together for a morning meeting. It is a time to discuss what's going on at LRCS, talk about current events outside of school, share stories with one another, and sing a song. This year's morning meetings have been different from years past, though.

Our olders students, Nora Bradford and Victoria Boswell, have primarily led this year's morning meeting. Also, there have been weekly themes discussed. For example, we've talked

about caring, respect, and how to be helpful to others. It has been an awesome experience to watch students initiate meetings, get involved in school-wide discussions, and listen to one another with respect.

Six students, including four Olders and two Middles, are now taking a Peer Mediation class. SLU Senior, Lauren Stemler, is facilitating the six hour training session. Students are learning to use and apply the skills of Marshal Rosenberg's nonviolent communication. Specifically they will be using a method of reflecting the

feelings and needs of students in conflict to help them resolve their problems.

By Emily Cambridge Carrier



Mother and child by Victoria Boswell

We Need Your Help to Grow (Continued from page 1)

worker, bringing the total to four full-time staff and two part-time workers. We could see growing to a maximum of about 45 students to maintain our small, individualized educational setting.

Our proposal is to build a 24' x 30' addition with two floors. We envision adding one classroom; a large multipurpose room for large group activities, meetings and performances; and two small rooms for small group and one-on-one activities. To build and equip the addition will cost \$98,930, including heaters, lights, safety equipment and furniture.

We have submitted an application for a \$60,000 grant to the St. Lawrence River Valley Redevelopment Agency, administered through the IDA. We

"With the building addition and an expanded staff, more students will have the opportunity to join the Little River experience."

expect to hear back from them by the first week of April. If the grant is successful, the school will need to match it by raising \$38,930 this spring and we would begin construction by

the first of June to complete the project before fall 2012. The school also has three other grant requests to other foundations.

We cannot do this alone and are asking for community support. We are turning to you to find donors or other people that can support us in this endeavor. This is a one-time request to build our capacity; with the building addition and an expanded staff, more students will have the opportunity to join the Little River experience. In this way we can expand the educational diversity and options in the North Country.

Do You Like What You See?

Do you like what you see? Please support us with a contribution to our tuition aid fund.

Little River is an independent alternative school and does not receive state funding. We are looking to raise \$98,930 to build an addition on the school so we can add a new classroom and take on more students. We are seeking grants, major donors and grassroots contributors to help us achieve this goal.

Yes, I like what I see. I would like to make a contribution to the school.

___ \$25 ___ \$100
___ \$50 ___ other \$ _____

Or contribute monthly:
\$ _____ (please specify)

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Mail your tax deductible contribution to: Little River Community School, 1227 CR 25, Canton, NY 13617. Thank you!

From Africa to Anthropology

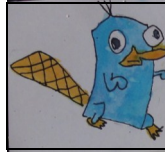
At the beginning of the school year we decided to focus our studies on Africa. This was based, in part, on our African Drumming grant and our work with Len Mackey this past fall.

As often happens at Little River, it became something much larger. Africa class has become Anthropology class, focusing on Cultural Anthropology for both the Middles and Olders.

In the Fall, after defining culture as a set of learned behaviors, we looked at the basic parts of life that inform culture: clothing, language, housing, myths (religion), food, family, etc. The students were excited to learn about different types of societies including: egalitarian, horticultural, pastoral, agricultural and industrial.

When we watched the National Geographic Africa series, the kids were able to connect the dots from what we learned in class to what they saw in real peoples' lives in Africa.

With this basic knowledge, the students are able to look at other cultures with an open mind, recognizing the differences from their own lives without judging, good or bad, right or wrong. They are able to look at something new and different with awe instead of fear. *By Maria Corse*



Platypus by Bailey Bohl

Thanks!

We would like to thank the following people for their contributions to Little River: **Matt Bullwinkle** and **Seba Molnar** for providing music at the Winterfest; **Jean and Eric Williams-Bergen** and **Richard Stevens** for heading up the on-line auction; **Lauren Stemler** from SLU for facilitating the peer-meditation group; **Linda McQuinn**, Canton's economic developer, for all the help she gave in the

grant writing process; and the following businesses and individuals that contributed to our successful auction—**Total Image, Helen Kenny of The Knead of Life Massage; Jay Schechter MD; Shelby Connelly Fisher of New Possibilities Traditional Acupuncture Center, Rob Klein; Paula Youmell of Hands On Health Holistic Healing; Sergi's in Potsdam, Red Button Bakery, Susan Powers, Honey Dew Acres, The Computer Guys, Seymour Duncan, 1844 House, Hurlbut's Maple, Oddball's Emporium, Main Street Barber, Northern Lights Yoga, TAUNY, St. Lawrence County Arts Council, Tim's Comic and Game, Valerie Summer, Alchemistress, Coreen Bohl, Rainbow Crabtree, Isis Melhado, 8 O'Clock Ranch, Misty Hollow, Rex Hardware, Birdsfoot Farm, Deep Root Farm, Blackbird Cafe, Village Wine and Liquor, the Potsdam Consumers Co-op, Chip's Place, the Brewer Bookstore, Wight and Patterson, the Pear Tree, Thai Cuisine, Walmart, Glow Skincare and Spa, Jernabi, the Price Chopper, the Potsdam Agway, and Nature's Storehouse.**

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