

Field Notes

The Weekly Newsletter of the Community School for Place-Based Education
September 22, 2023 | Year 10, Issue 3

Foreword

With the arrival of the autumnal equinox, we have officially entered the fall! I hope that you enjoy these stories, poems, and photographs from our third week of school.

- Eloise

Fall Song

Mary Oliver

Another year gone, leaving everywhere
its rich spiced residues: vines, leaves,

the uneaten fruits crumbling damply
in the shadows, unmattering back

from the particular island
of this summer, this NOW, that now is nowhere

except underfoot, moldering
in that black subterranean castle

of unobservable mysteries - roots and sealed seeds
and the wanderings of water. This

I try to remember when time's measure
painfully chafes, for instance when autumn

flares out at the last, boisterous and like us longing
to stay - how everything lives, shifting

from one bright vision to another, forever
in these momentary pastures.

Thank You

Hats off to our parent volunteer drivers for the CGF: **Ewa Cohen, Heather Carlisle, Ashley McLean, and Johannah Blackman!** Thanks as well to **Bar Harbor Bank & Trust, Regan Greer (COA), and Acadia National Park** for hosting our Outings this week.

Reminders

Morning drop-off is from 8:00 - 8:15am. If you arrive late, the front door will be locked. Please bring your student to the office to check in with Patience.

Class Meetings are coming up this week:

Alpines on 9/25
Woodlands on 9/26
Intertidals on 9/27
Sweet Ferns on 9/28

From the Sweet Fern Class

Dear Sweet Fern Families,

We continue to engage our senses in the world around us here at school, venturing to special nooks in the forest, along the marsh, in the garden, at Gnome Camp, and to the Whalesback this week! As we near closer to autumn, we are noticing the many signs of the changing seasons and relishing in the cooler air, tinges of red on the maples, droves of green acorns, and... apples! We harvested many apples from our old wild tree at the field's edge, and we have been enjoying sampling and learning the stories of many heirlooms from John Bunker's *Out on a Limb* CSA. Each Tuesday morning, the Sweet Ferns take a Wonder Walk to a new place and write a group poem, exercising the best of their "juicy language" in a collective poem that we write down as they share. It is always a joy to see the poets' faces as we read the final piece to them. They always proudly add in unison at the end, "by the Sweet Ferns!"



Hazel and Lumen climbing the pine
in the Old Pasture

Dear Old Apple Tree

A group poem by The Sweet Ferns

Your juicy apples fall to the ground
And I pick them up in baskets
I see your bright leaves
Turning orange, yellow, reddish-brown
Fall is coming
Green moss hugs your old branches
I eat a big apple
So do our friends porcupine, deer
chipmunk and field mouse
I hope you have a good long life
Full of apples and happiness
We hope you grow tall
and see many a fall.



Apple Tasting #2!



Charlee and Hazel retrieving wild apples

In addition to settling into math and literacy stations, building a number line with sticks, listening to the Way of Gnome during rest time, baking bread, and nature journaling, we have been focusing on our Non Violent Communication skills in our social-emotional work. Just like we make observations in the natural world, we have learned it is helpful to begin with observations as we address friends in instances of conflict or discontent (#1: When you...). Next we have been exploring the words we put to our big feelings (#2: I feel...), and lastly, that we can make respectful requests to inspire change in behavior (#3: My request is...). We have created an art project out of these three steps that will serve as a mindfulness tool, and that we will practice using all year long! Ask your Sweet Fern about this work, as we will continue to practice our mindful communication with stories, skits, artwork, and awareness in our daily interactions.

From all of us in the Sweet Fern Class, Happy Fall Equinox.



Mr. Jesse and Ronan consult a field guide

From the Woodland Class

Dear Woodland families,

There are moments in life where things just seem to fall into place. This past week felt like that in the Woodland class! We started our week settling back into the routines of our stations during workshops, we visited the Carroll Homestead and learned about family farming, and we worked in our new outdoor classroom space. Each of these events seemed to flow together naturally and with ease. Beautiful sketches of our TCS garden for morning nature journaling was the perfect way to remind us of our Agriculture on MDI theme.

On Tuesday, Ms. Autumn told the story of the Carroll family and their many generations who lived on the homestead. A new view on farming evolved. Growing enough to sustain your family and also support your community. Wednesday found us out beyond the Old Pasture in our new outdoor classroom space. It is a work in progress but we started to see a vision of its future. We sat in the shade of tall spruces and heard the story of *Pancho Rabbit and the Coyote*. Here, the Woodlands learned about migrant workers and some of the obstacles they encounter on their journeys to find work in big farms. Many hands make light work, but gratitude for those hands is important to hold and recognize.

Of course, Math and ELA integrated throughout these adventures. Number bond relays at Carroll Homestead. Writing adjectives to describe yummy apples from our apple CSA. Many stories read and discussed about where our food comes from and who helps it find its way to our tables.



Margaux sketches the TCS garden



Isla practices math at Carroll Homestead

How do you end such a wonder-filled week? A visit to the Common Ground Fair, of course! Thank you for sharing your Woodlands with us and letting us be a part of their educational journey!

Warmly,
Ms. Autumn & Ms. Alisa



Number bond relays at Carroll Homestead



Posing with foraged bouquets at the Old Pasture

From the Intertidal Class

Dear Intertidal families,

The Intertidal class has been filled with joy, stories and plenty of laughter this week. We are striving for more integration amongst subjects which means that Math and ELA concepts are woven into Expedition activities throughout the day. We still have our specific math and literacy skills workshops but have noticed that working on these skills within our Expedition block leads to far more connections between concepts and real-world applications!

Our math groups have settled into their routine and are working well independently before checking work with each other and the teacher. We will be taking advantage of our final warm days and exploring how our math concepts are present around campus. ELA groups are exploring rhyming patterns and meter to produce ballads related to our Economics unit. These will be finished and published next week, ask your student!



Sienna moving into multiplication



Arlo practicing money math

Our outing this week took us to Seawall, where we explored the shore and had lunch before visiting Bar Harbor Bank and Trust in Somesville to deposit a check and learn about the movement of money within banks. Students asked poignant questions and learned about how they can utilize banks to help with their finances in the future.

- Teacher Dani and Mr. Jon



Enjoying our yurt library



Intertidals visiting our local bank

From the Alpine Class

Dear Alpine families,

The Alpines had a blast this week visiting College of the Atlantic's composting toilets, which we were impressed to learn, are still going strong after fifteen years! We hope that your Alpines regaled you with tales of the toilet, as well as our anthropological observation of the COA Dining Hall.

Back on campus, we are enjoying our first theme of ELA: grammar and syntax. Sample sentences have brought much delight and humor to our study of subjects and predicates. Meanwhile, in Math, our sixth and seventh grade students are learning about proportional rates and comparing ratios, while eighth graders have finished learning the laws of exponents and are proceeding to proofs. This all sounds very serious, so in the meantime, we're making sure to be very silly – and got to put our talents on display through a candy-bar making activity in Expedition.

During Morning Meetings, we have been focusing on Alpine responsibilities and classrooms stewardship. Our Deep Thought Thursday question led to provocative share-session on the merits and pitfalls of social media. Do you think it's more harmful or more helpful to society?



Kaleb experiences a Cardboard Chair made by a COA arts & design student.



Simone describes the global sources of her candy bar ingredients, from white chocolate to strawberry nougat

We are extremely excited for the Fair and for the opportunity to roam the grounds, where the Alpines will attend workshops on Pho-making, Chicken First Aid, and clothes mending. Till soon!

- Ms. Eloise, Ms. Kelsi, and Ms. Emily



Marveling at the composting toilet, expertly explained by COA's Regan Greer

News and Upcoming Events

Fall Friday Feast: Friday, October 29th

This year, each class will host a Friday Feast to celebrate the season. Each class will bring a dish to share with the whole school and there will be an all school activity to follow the meal. To celebrate the coming of fall, the Sweet Ferns are hosting this first feast of Stone Soup, apple cheddar biscuits, salad and apple sauce peanut butter cookies. You do not have to pack lunch for your child on this day.

Wonder Walks: Wednesdays in October (4th, 11th, 18th, 25th)

Join teachers in the Sweet Fern Forest Kindergarten for a four-part immersion in the season of autumn. Each week, we will explore a location and theme through hands-on, nature-based activities that foster conversation and community-building among parents and children.

NE Creek Paddle/Cranberry Harvest: October 4th, All-Day Outing

Grades 1-5 will embark on this all day outing on Northeast Creek to learn about the ecology of the bog and harvest cranberries for our annual batch of TCS canned goods. Drop off and pick-up will be at the old Pooler Farm, 1098 State Hwy 3, Bar Harbor. Please pack extra snacks and be sure your child is wearing their grundens and rain boots!

10/10 Celebration at Fogtown: October 10th, 5:00-7:00pm

Come celebrate TCS's 10th year with wood fired pizza and family friendly place-based drink at the Fogtown Ellsworth beer garden. The featured pizza of the evening will be a TCS apple-cheddar with caramelized onion and wild sorrel, and Jon will be making a local apple-cranberry spritzer for the event. A slideshow from the last 10 years will play throughout the evening and 10% of sales on 10/10 will be donated to TCS.

Apple Fest: Friday, October 13th, 3:30-5:30pm

Come press apples, taste our favorite heirlooms and enjoy a fireside potluck at our 10th annual apple festival! Apples have so many stories to tell and they are part of our fall tradition at TCS. Come explore, taste and welcome fall with us along Babson Creek.

TCS Film Screening, October 14th: 5:00pm at COA

Since last March, local filmmaker Nikolai Fox has been filming our programs with an observational documentary approach. At this event, we will present an in-progress reel and host a discussion about filmmaking and Place-based education.



Cultivating a Sense of Self, Place, and Community