

Classroom Newsletter

CAREN & STEVE & JACK

Adolescent Program | 2016-17



Humanities: History of Voting Rights by Ayden Cinel

Over the course of the year, our school covers many subjects in humanities and occupations. The first humanities study of the year was the history of voting rights. In this class, our guide, Steve Ligon, taught the class about the challenges all people have faced, including African-Americans, women, and white men, while trying to acquire the right to vote. Steve usually starts off the class by posing some essential questions about the topic to think about and answer during the lesson. We also read and annotate documents during class. Then, we view about the hardships that the people faced, or videos about people in court, telling juries unbelievable stories about what happened to them when they tried to vote.

In one video, an African-American woman was in court telling her story of trying to vote. She said that when she walked over forty miles with some of her friends to the courthouse to try and register to vote, she was met by state and highway patrolmen who only let two of them in at a time. Someone else in another video had said, when they were leaving the polling station, on a bus this time, the officers fined the driver for transporting the “wrong color” of people.

Our class learned that after the signing of the Declaration of Independence most states only let free white men who owned property to vote. In the early 1800s, the property restrictions were removed in some states. Then the Reconstruction Period following the Civil War brought about the 13th, 14th, and 15th amendments, officially giving the right to vote to all men. After that, towards the late 1800s to the early 1900s, women realizing the injustice that was being done to them, started acting upon it. In 1920, the 19th amendment was passed that allowed all women to vote.

At the end of the class we created a road map to the presidency, including key points on the way. I enjoyed this class, even though at the start of it I thought I wasn't going to be into it. The class was fun and entertaining, and I hope the next humanities study will be just the same.



Barn Chores by Atara Harrari

About half of our adolescent group does barn chores each morning when we get to school. The other half works in microeconomy, which is where food that we harvest from our garden is prepared to eat or sell.

In our farm school we have 3 types of animals. We have chickens, goats and sheep. We do barn chores and microeconomy work in the morning from 8:35 -9:15a.m.



Chickens:

Each day the people that take care of the chickens feed them, change their water, clean their pen, and feed them scratch (a mixture of corn and other dried vegetables).

We also harvest our chickens' eggs and sell them.

Goats:

At our farm we have three goats. One is called Daisy who at this time is the only one producing milk. Every morning we feed the goats, milk Daisy, and clean the goats' pen. We make all different types of goods from the goat milk such as cheese, soap, yogurt, ice cream and hot chocolate, but we only sell the soap.



Sheep :



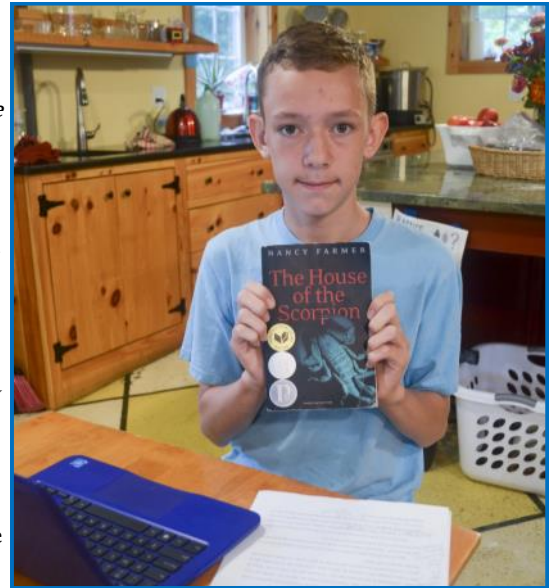
Every day we feed the sheep, change their water, and clean their pen.

We shear our sheep twice a year and spin the wool. Then, we sell the yarn as well as sending some of our wool to be spun into blankets at the Connecticut Blanket Society.

Literature- The House of the Scorpion

By Jack Bourdeaux

The first book we are reading this year is the *House of the Scorpion*. It's set in the future, where drugs are legal, and aristocratic drug farmers have a lot of control in North America. Between Aztlan, the new name for Mexico, and the United States, there is a strip of land that is almost entirely poppy fields. Poppy fields, the book explains, contain opium and are used by the obscenely rich El Patron, a 140-year-old drug lord who controls the opium—and the strip of land between Aztlan and the U.S.



The book opens in a lab, where a man named Eduardo is monitoring the growth of 36 little human cells. It soon becomes clear, when over half of them die, that his life—and the life of his family—is depending on the survival of the cells. Eventually only one of them is left. When the baby is born, Eduardo tries to destroy the baby's mind—as he does with all the babies that he grows. A woman named Lisa stops him and says that the baby—a boy—is a Matteo Alacran, and that they are always left “intact.” Evidently, the world that these people live in is exceedingly harsh.

After we read the first chapter in class, I couldn't stop myself from reading the second one, right then and there. The second chapter raises a whole host of new questions, without giving any rock-solid answers to any of the questions raised by the first.

After that, as if we hadn't had enough questions for one day, we were handed packets filled with about 30 questions. Some of them were technical—reading comprehension and all that. Other questions required more thought. Some of the questions were about where we thought the story was going to go. Others were about whether or not the characters had done the right thing or why we thought the characters had made the choices they did.

The book, which is not a very hard read—although later in the year we are going to read books such as *Great Expectations*—is extremely hard to put down. I think that I and the rest of the class are looking forward to finishing the book.



Preserving The Harvest by Corbett DiIulio



In the beginning of the year, we made tomatillo salsa, with tomatillos that were grown in our garden. During our cooking class, we worked in groups. One group cut tomatillos, and then sterilized glass containers used for the tomatillo salsa. The other group prepared the other ingredients: garlic, onions, olive oil, and salt.

Another fun activity we did in the beginning of the year was making grape jelly. The grapes were found around our property. When making the jelly, we harvested around 8

pounds of grapes. These 8 pounds made about 3 batches of grape jelly. After adding sugar and pectin, we then added 5 and a half cups of mashed grapes. We mixed the ingredients together and let it boil. After boiling the grape jelly, we placed the grape jelly in the sterilized jars, let it cool and then created labels that we placed on the jars to sell. After we made our grape jelly, we served it for snack, and it tasted amazing! Also, tomatillo salsa is a great dip for crackers!



Afternoon Projects by Jon Sullivan

Projects time in the afternoon is when we students take turns helping out around the farm. We have worked in the garden making new beds for the fruits and vegetables. We dug holes for the raspberry trellis and we stood up the plants that had fallen down with wooden sticks and twine. We also took all of the dead plants to the back



compost pile. In addition, we harvested a variety of peppers, tomatoes, basil, gourds, carrots, eggplant, zucchini and tomatillos, as well as grapes for our grape jelly. We had to go across the street and climb a ladder to pick the wild Concord grapes. We also worked in the barn. For example, we made a door stop because when you pushed on the door it pushed too far in and left a gap

where the chicks could get out! So far, the projects have been interesting.

Espanol en el Año Nuevo By Emma Stremper

Este es mi último año en la granja y estoy empezando Español tres. Coming back to the afternoon Spanish room and shrugging off the summer cobwebs took me back to last year. Nevertheless, when the verb conjugations floating around in my head secure their places I am ready to move forward. My new Spanish three book is sleek, shiny, and *verde*, a favorite color. Coming in from recess and telling of our outside adventures en Español always feels good. “*Nuestro equipo ganó hoy! Dos a cuatro!*” or “*¿Viste el gran huevo que el pollo puso a hoy?*”

Starting off this year, my Spanish class has read about *la historia de Mexico. Muy interesante!*

Some of my Spanish academic goals for the year include working on my pronunciation, developing my power to comprehend and practicing the art of a lively Spanish conversation. I recognize that it is not *just* knowing all of the vocabulary, as I work my way through the chapters, but getting the nuances of the language and even expanding my understanding of English is what is important. Whether I go all the way and become a fluent speaker, or end my Spanish studies in the next few years, I will be glad to have had this exposure in my daily studies at the farm.

En las próximas semanas vamos a obtener pollitos. Este evento me recuerda a una canción en Espanol de mis años de primaria.

Ese pollito que tu me regalaste

Ese pollito que tu me regalaste

Pio pio pio pio siempre me dice

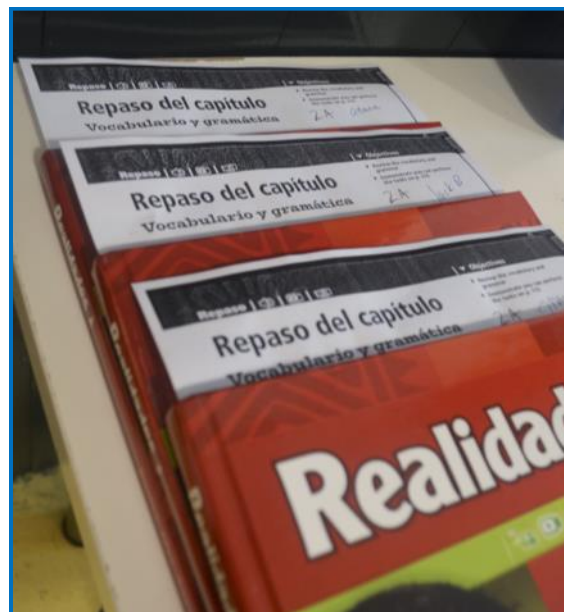
Pio pio pio pio de mi corral.

Ese pollito que tu me regalaste

Ese pollito que tu me regalaste

Pio pio pio pio yo le respondo

Pio pio pio pio de mi corral.



Open Time and Organized Sports by Emilio Chan

At the farm, we call recess open time. It lasts for 25 minutes every day. On Tuesday and on Thursday, we play organized sports in the field next to the classroom. We play our games here at the farm because the bus is no longer available during recess to take us to Brown's Corner. We usually play Capture the Flag as an organized sport, although last year we played Ultimate Frisbee, basketball, and a game called Scatterball which was introduced to us by our gym teacher, Ms. Debbie. Recently, though, Steve has put up a volleyball net and we have been playing Nukem, a game similar to volleyball, but one in which one can throw and catch the ball.



On Monday, Wednesday, and Friday we play various games, or play with the animals. Last year we played informal soccer and hide and seek tag (using the whole property). But in the fall last year, several of us and Steve went running to prepare for the annual Mitten Run, a 5K in West Hartford Center. This year hide and seek is still quite popular, but some people are getting into running. We hope to see you at the Mitten Run! Details at:

http://www.hartfordmarathon.com/Events/Blue_Back_Mitten_Run_Presented_by_UnitedHealthcare.htm

Math by Lauren Zaborowski

The Adolescent Math Program at MSGH runs in the afternoon of every day and is taught by Jack McArdle. At the beginning of the school year, we were given a packet of various types of math problems to determine where we stood with our level of knowledge. In addition, we took a canoeing trip down the Farmington River which gave us the opportunity to have a real world problem solving equation



which we were given along with the packet. Something that's unique and exciting about our school's math program is that due to our size we can each receive lots of individual attention. This is the most important ingredient to the success of all the students at the Montessori Adolescent Program. Math is a subject that is a big factor in all of our lives from the very simple to the more complex. In the upcoming year it will be very interesting to see, like we did with our canoe trip, the different ways that we will be able to apply math to our lives. Whether its testing the water samples throughout Connecticut, or maybe something fun from our next field trip, we are looking forward to the upcoming year.

New Chicks! By Ella Levy and Jack Newhouse

A big part of our education here at the farm is learning about the animals. At the farm, we have sheep, goats, and chickens. Normally we have two flocks of chickens, but recently, we gave the old flock away to be slaughtered. Now, because we only have one flock, it is time to get chicks so that when they mature, they will become egg producing chickens.



We order our chicks from mypetchicken.com. It is a website that helps you decide on which breeds of chickens will work well together in a flock. We strategically pick breeds of chickens for their winter hardiness, ability to live together, and overall best egg production year round. Mypetchicken mails the chicks once they have hatched.

In preparation for the arrival of our chicks, we have worked on cleaning their brood box, washing their water and food containers, vacuuming the chick pen, and testing light bulbs. We do this to ensure that they have the best environment to live in for their first four weeks. Young chicks need to be kept at a very warm temperature of 95 degrees for their first week to survive, lowering the temperature weekly as they get older. We hang plastic sheets on the outside of the chick pen (which is a small room we use for the chicks when they are young) to keep it nice and toasty inside. We use a 250-watt infrared heat lamp and place it over the opening in the brood box. After about four weeks, the chicks can be moved outside into a permanent, sturdy chicken coop.

Having chickens in the barn is a great addition to the farm.



Food at the Farm By Dre Laborde

Lunch is 30 minutes long. To determine where each of us sits, we put a jar with a playing card on each table, then we pick a card from the deck and we sit at the table that matches the card we picked. This process is a randomizer, so we sit with random people and socialize in a more mature way. We are allowed to use the two microwaves and all types of utensils as long as we put them in the wash after. We usually bring cold dishes that we reheat here. My favorite tool is the panini press, a machine that reheats or grills sandwiches. The noise level is a bit like a restaurant, not too excited but moderate.

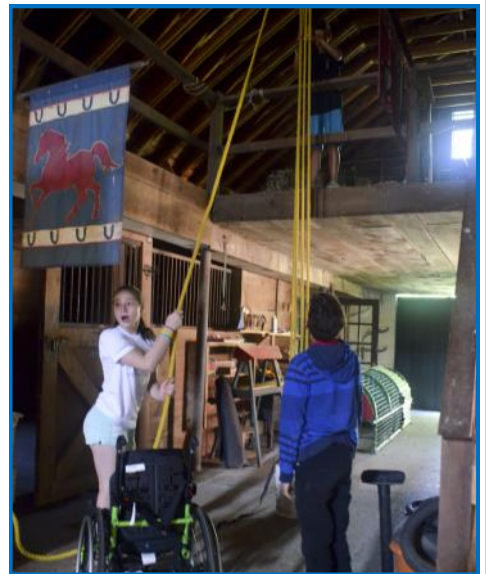
Then there is the snack table. Every morning, someone prepares or brings a snack for the day. We can be up to 2 at the table and not linger for more than three or four minutes. Sometimes we cook the snack, sometimes we bring it, and sometimes it is already there. The snacks are usually products of the farm such as tomatillo sauce, grape jelly, and pickled beets. We also have cooking class every week during which we cook some tortilla chips, pesto, pasta, tomatoes and a variety of other farm treats.

Ruminants by Maya Oberstein

In occupations we are learning about ruminants. Ruminants are animals with 4 sections in their stomachs, that chew on cud and have a split hoof. On the farm we have two different types of ruminant animals: goats and sheep.

We also started by learning about cells. We learned about Prokaryotic cells and Eukaryotic cells. We studied the different parts of the cells and what each part does. We also made diagrams of cells out of gelatin and items from our garden.

We looked at selective breeding and GMO, and what people can do with animals. We learned that people are using GMO to create cures to certain diseases. We also saw pictures of animals that glow because



of GMO.



We studied the different types of infectious diseases. Each of us gathered information about a different type of infectious disease and made a PowerPoint presentation. We are also looking at the body's defense system. We are learning about different types of cells, which include white blood cells, T, and B cells. We also learned about what they do for the body's defense system. We all made lab experiments. We swabbed two different things on the farm. We are watching them and recording data on them. We formed a plan for the experiment, the title, our hypothesis, what we needed for it, and the procedure. The plan is to find out which of the two things grows more bacteria. We are learning a lot about our goats and sheep and are looking forward to learning more.

Stone Museum by Scott Black

On August 31, the first day of school, we, the students of the adolescent program, went on a field trip to the Stone Museum. At the museum there were many artifacts that were donated over the years it has been open. There were assorted animal skulls from a small squirrel to a full grown black bear. The museum also contained ancient artifacts such as fossilized dinosaur feces. All of the artifacts that are in the Stone Museum were found locally in Connecticut. I had no idea there was so much history in Connecticut!



After we had looked around the museum and took notes, we went on a hike. It was the second time I had done this. I felt nostalgic, remembering the first time I had visited. During that trip we found a letterbox on the hiking path and on this hike, we found it again. I was able to find all of the signatures of my friends who have now left the farm. This was a very enjoyable way to start the new school year.

Farmington River by Wave Thomas



During the first week of school, we went to the Farmington River to go canoeing as a class. The business was called the 'Huck Finn Adventures Kayaking and Canoeing.' Upon arrival we were greeted by some of the staff who explained where we were to start our journey. We were driven to the start location where we chose our canoes and crew. There were three canoes with three people and four canoes with two people aboard. Our canoe included Ayden, Scott, and myself. We named our vessel the UDN Saw, and our ongoing mission

was to explore new beach fronts and go where no Millstreamer has gone before.

Once everyone loaded up, we set sail and started our three hour journey down the Farmington River. Our guide canoe stayed ahead of us telling us about the river as we went down the river. He mentioned multiple spots where the staff had excavated arrow heads and tools from an ancient era. The early part of our trip was rough, and there were parts of the river where the current tried pushing us into an obstacle or a beach head.

Eventually we grew hungry and started searching for an area to pull in and eat our lunch. Our guide canoe found a nice patch under some trees by the river where we could sit and enjoy our edibles. After some time of eating we skipped rocks into the river. Our break was well enjoyed



and everyone was ready to continue our mission. All of the captains loaded their crew aboard their canoes and we once again set sail. The UDN Saw experienced what seemed like an inspiration movie. We were in last place, doubting that we'd ever make it so far as first. Our attempts at passing the canoe in front of us failed numerous times. The Saw crashed at least twice and we were ready to give up. Scott shared a message of truth with Ayden and me explaining that if we tried hard enough we could push ahead to first place. After a good thirty minutes of passing other canoes and dodging obstacles, we made it to first place. Once we succeeded, we quickly realized that our journey was not a race. We opened our ears to the guide ship as they explained their

re-creation of the scene of a deer being killed during hunting thousands of years ago.

Our journey was long but it did not last forever. We never grew bored only tired with aches in our arms. We fulfilled our mission and were ready to pull into port. We abandoned our canoes and walked the land for the first time in three whole hours. By then the Saw was filled with around two inches of water. Our journey was entertaining and we'd surely do it all again.

