



Fall 2008

The Mission of Japhet School



Japhet School nurtures and prepares each child for life by integrating character education with a strong academic program.

Upcoming Events:

- November 6: 18 Reasons for Hope Luncheon
- November 21: Social Studies Fair
- November 26: Gratitude Service
- December 11 & 12: Christmas Giving

Japhet School

31201 Dorchester • Madison Heights, MI 48071 • 248/585-9150 • www.japhet.org

Message from the Head of School



It is with great enthusiasm that we welcome you to Japhet School's 35th year! Japhet has been demonstrating its mission to nurture and prepare each child for life by integrating character education with a strong academic program since 1973.

"Children develop character by what they see, what they hear, and what they are repeatedly led to do." ~ James Stenson

Japhet continues to be a leader in teaching and promoting character education. This fall we hosted our fifth annual Character Conference. Our keynote speaker was Sean Hogan-Downey, LMSW, who spoke on the topic of "Parenting Children in Indulgent Times."

What's new at Japhet? New carpeting graces the halls, library, centrum, and Art room. New signage is in place throughout the building as a result of a service-learning project through Detroit Public Schools and U of M Detroit Community Design Center. Two new teachers are sharing their talents with us in Music and Foreign Language. iMac computers are new to our Middle (3rd/4th-grade) Class, and updated computers are supporting students in the computer lab. Twenty new students have joined us.

You can come see what's happening for yourself! You are invited to join us on **Thursday, November 6th from 12:00 - 1:00 pm** for Japhet's **18 Reasons for Hope Fundraising Luncheon** at the Club Venetian, or visit the school on **Friday, November 21st from 10:00 am - 12:00 pm** for **Japhet's Social Studies Fair**.

Individual tours are available. If you'd like to visit or introduce a friend to Japhet, give us a call or e-mail me at cmohan@japhet.org.

At Japhet we have had to bid a sad and unexpected farewell to Marie Siporin, who died suddenly in October. Marie was our Administrative Assistant, a key member of our team, and a dear friend of mine. Her daily presence is missed by all of us, especially by our students who liked to come and visit Miss Marie in the front office. She is remembered with affection, and with gratitude for her 12 years of devoted service to Japhet School.

Cathy Mohan
Head of School



Marie Siporin will be remembered fondly by the Japhet family.

Life Skills teacher and Admissions Director Robin Pospisil and an Upper Class student work together in our updated computer lab to make a flier for Hot Lunch. This Japhet tradition brings the community together, gives families a break from making lunches, teaches students food preparation and service, and is a delicious fundraiser for UC. Hot Lunches are open events throughout the school year ... call to see when our next one is scheduled!



New Faces, New Roles

Japhet faculty and staff warmly welcomed two new faces to Japhet, and one Japhet staff member has returned to a faculty position that brought him joy 10 years ago.



Ebony Stokes is Japhet's new Foreign Language teacher. Ebony loves the study of language, and recently returned from a two-year teaching position in Ehime, Japan. Besides having fluency in Japanese, she also speaks Spanish, French, and her native language – English. Ebony holds a Bachelor's degree in human resource management from Oakland University.

"I chose to work at Japhet because it is a small school and provides a family-like atmosphere," says Señorita Ebony. "The teaching of character makes Japhet unique. I've been to all sorts of schools, but they've never felt like this."

Preschool through eighth-grade students receive Spanish instruction.



Martin Mandelbaum is an accomplished musician in Metro Detroit as a pianist, organist, choir director, conductor, composer, and piano and vocal teacher. He earned his bachelor's degree in music at Wayne State University, and has served dozens of churches, theatres, schools, and other venues with his talents. Last school year, he brought a ladies' choir to perform at Japhet, and he was so impressed with the students' manners and participation, that he welcomed an invitation to teach here.

"I thought, 'it sounds like an adventure!'" Mr. Marty recalls. "I really appreciate the character qualities taught here at Japhet, and the opportunity to work with classroom teachers."

All Japhet students have Music class.



Joe Mohan has been a familiar face at Japhet for 20 years as a parent and as Technology Advisor. Ten years ago, he also taught physical education, working to bring the true meaning of competition – which means "to strive together" – into Japhet's P.E. program. For 2008-2009, Mr. Mohan has returned to that role, teaching P.E. to students in Kindergarten through eighth grade.

"Japhet School is a great place to work because it feels like family," says Mr. Mohan. "But best of all is knowing that a student who goes to Japhet for eight years – or even less than that – is so much more prepared for high school and college because of the character foundation they receive here."

Mr. Mohan also is a retired firefighter and fire inspector. He currently serves as head coach for the robotics team at Brother Rice High School.

Be Considerate, Do Your Best, and Have Fun

Those are the three goals that Japhet Middle Schoolers (5th through 8th) strive to reach during their annual September retreat to the Leelanau Outdoor Center in northern Michigan.

"If you're considerate and strive to do your best, the third goal is automatic," says a sixth-grader.

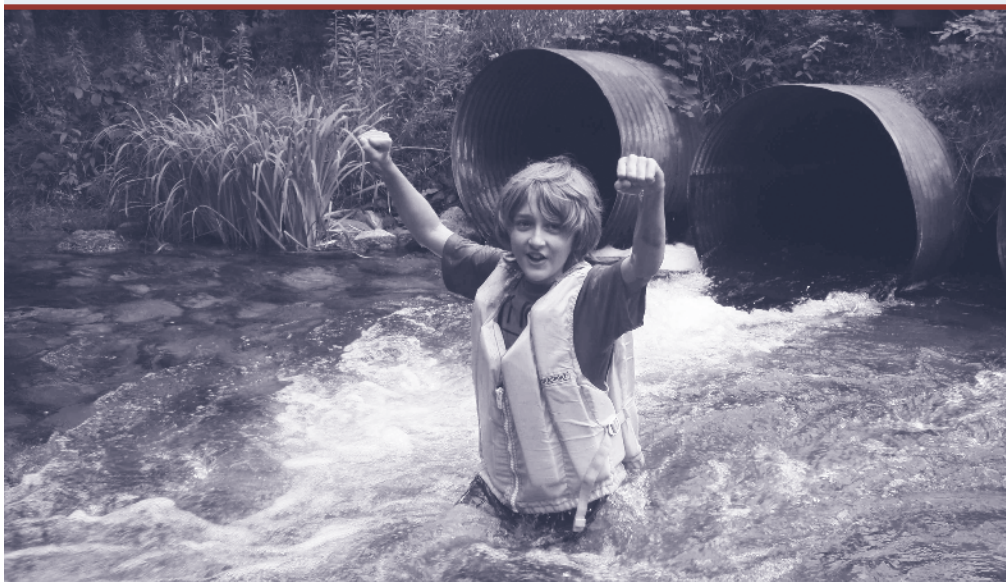
Every year at LOC, teachers see new friendships form, students in all four grades encourage each other without hesitation, and each person gently pushed outside what he or she finds "comfortable" ... thereby making that circle of comfort a little bit bigger. Leelanau's beautiful outdoor setting and activities facilitate a spirit of cooperation, unity, and focused academic learning.

The camping trip always includes a special hike, during which the lead counselor imparts lessons that relate to school and life. This year's lessons were:

1. The Lesson of the Grapevine – a particular species of grapevine is invasive to Michigan, and along the trail it was holding up a partially felled tree, still alive. "Sometimes we need to rely on those who would otherwise annoy us," the counselor shared.
2. The Lesson of the False Summit – sometimes we think we've reached our goal, only to realize we have more to go. A seventh-grade student connected it to school in this humorous way, "It's like thinking you've finished a test, and then you realize the test paper is a two-sider."
3. The Lesson of the Coyote – Sometimes you've "just gotta howl."

The LOC trip makes a lasting impression, and it is discussed all year long among students and teachers.

At left: A fifth-grade student celebrates "shooting the culvert" -- an activity that is eagerly anticipated by first-time LOC campers like himself.



Michigan, Brazil, and Beyond Social Studies Fair and Guest Day

Mark your calendars! Just around the bend is Japhet School's annual Social Studies Fair and Guest Day, which takes place **Friday, November 21, from 10:00 AM to 12:00 PM.**

On this special day, students will share what they've learned about Michigan, the Brazilian Rainforest, South American countries, and the Constitution and its amendments.

Preschool students are learning about harvest. Students will have activities to share with guests like wheat grinding, pumpkin pounding, and spicy orange playdough. Current art projects will be on display, and students will share homemade "stone soup."

Kindergarten students are learning all about Michigan. They will have a Michigan diorama to share that they built together, homemade applesauce, and Michigan books to read together. Their diorama will be an Eastern Market that will show produce, furniture, animals and vehicles from Michigan. Kindergarten families will have much to do with their young Michiganians!

Primary Class students have been learning about the Brazilian rainforest, and they will teach guests about that rainforest. We can look forward to presentations about the layers of the rainforest, the animals that live there, Brazilian people, geography, and a special Brazilian food dish to share with guests.

Middle Class will transform into a Living Museum of Michigan. Building on what students learn in Kindergarten, Middle Class students will delve into the details of Michigan's British and French history, lumber industry, mining, the Macinac Bridge, Native American culture, natural resources, and more. Students will share this information in a variety of ways.

Intermediate Class students will apply their understanding of the Five Themes of Geography – Location, Place, Human Interaction with the Environment, Movement, and Regions – to a South or Central American country. Then, they will take this knowledge and use it to write a creative story in which they become a person living in that country. Look forward to meeting these people on Social Studies Fair Day and learn what it's like to be a Central or South American.

Upper Class students will be doing a panel discussion about whether the Constitution is a pro-slavery or pro-liberty document. Upper Class is examining the amendments as well, and we look forward to their analysis as a panel of experts.

If you have attended Social Studies Fair in the past, you will notice a change in this year's venue. Social Studies Fair has become so popular, that we have been challenged to provide ample space for our students' presentations as well as a luncheon for 200 people. This year, we have decided to forego the luncheon, in order to provide more space for sharing and listening.

Japhet School's Social Studies Fair is an open event. You and your guests are welcome to attend!

FORE! the Kids

After several days of September rain that soaked southeast Michigan, the sun peeked out and we celebrated on the greens. Forty-six golfers teed off at Lyons Oak Golf Club in Wixom on September 15. The fundraising event featured 18 holes of golf, dinner, and an auction.

Special thanks to golf outing chairman Ted Balowski, sign provider MJA Graphics, photographer Cattail Productions, photography sponsor McNaughtonMcKay Electric, and prize sponsor Contractor Key LLC. In addition, we had 18 hole sponsors, and more than 40 individuals and companies contribute to the event in some way. The participation of golfers and sponsors enabled us to raise \$5,200.00 for Japhet School.

The winning team, pictured above, is Stephen Mosshart, Chuck Helppie, Bob Jones, and Trent Smith. Plans for next year's event are already underway! Stay tuned for a "Save the Date" notice in an upcoming *Japhet Journal*.



18 Reasons for Hope

Japhet gives us hope ... 18 Reasons of hope, to be exact. Come join us on **Thursday, November 6**, for our "18 Reasons of Hope" luncheon at Club Venetian on John R just north of 12 Mile Road. It is a one-hour event beginning at 12:00 PM.

This is Japhet's annual fundraising luncheon and is a major part of our development plan. All are invited to attend and celebrate why Japhet is so important to us. Become a table captain and help bring guests to the event. Or, bring a guest to tour the school and introduce them to what makes Japhet so special. To learn more about supporting this important day or to reserve your seat, please contact Lisa Johnson at lisa@japhet.org.

Grandparents of Japhet School

Several Japhet grandparents started a "Grandparents of Japhet School" organization devoted to support Japhet, to create a network of grandparents interested in Japhet, and to bring into closer relation a wider family of members in the promotion of Japhet School.

Membership in the organization consists only of grandparents and volunteer grandparents from throughout the country. Members are admitted to the organization at any time with the payment of the \$10.00 membership dues.

Their first meeting followed our first Hot Lunch in September. Hot Lunch likely will continue to be an opportune time for members to meet and, if their grandchildren are currently Japhet students, to see their loved ones during the school day.

For more information, please contact Japhet School.



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Alumni News

Hannah Hilzinger J'07

Hannah reports that she has conquered the halls and construction reroutes of Royal Oak High School and is enjoying the opportunities available to her in her sophomore year. She says that it feels great to be able to help new students through the challenges she faced as a freshman last year. Hannah's favorite class is Art where she enjoys the freedom to express herself in a multitude of ways. She has joined the ski club and SEA, an environmental organization for high school students.

Libby Samanen J'97

Libby attends various Japhet events where she brings us up to date. She is currently living in Detroit and is active in her Corktown community. Libby is managing an educational center in southwest Detroit where she works to bring English language skills to Spanish-speaking residents. She also volunteers at WDET for an organization that reads news articles to the blind. Last summer Libby traveled with friends to Peru and visited Machu Pichu. Libby is in touch with Japhet alumni Molly and Shelley Danner, Emily (Commer) Weichers, Michelle McCurties, and Brad Elliot.



Jake Mohan J'03

Jake is enjoying the snow, the cold and the great outdoors at Michigan Tech University in Houghton in the Upper Peninsula of Michigan. Sophomore classes in engineering have been challenging but manageable, leaving Jake time for rock and ice climbing, and sailing (he's the captain of the sailing team). He is also looking forward to the cold weather and is ready for snowboarding. Jake was the alumni speaker at Japhet's June 2007 graduation ceremony and caught up with several former school and classmates at the reunion afterward. Jake also completed a second summer as a counselor at Camp Leelanau where he saw many Japhet faces.

Do you have alumni news to share? Please send news and photos to Robin Pospisil, Director of Admissions at robinpospisil@japhet.org.

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