

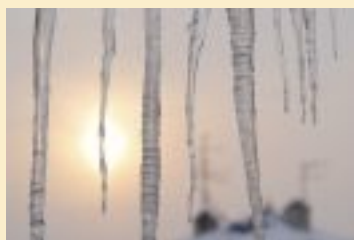


MONARCH SCHOOL NEWSLETTER

WINTER/SPRING 2013

MONARCH SCHOOL

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Monarch Parents Foundation

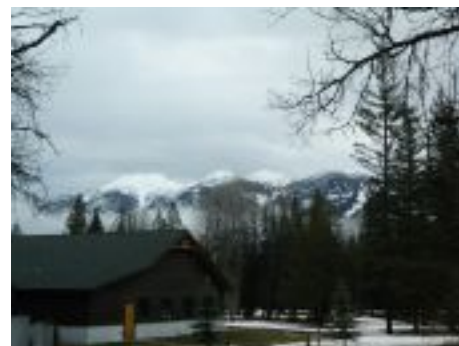
www.MonarchAlumns.org



Message From Our Academic Director

I am frequently asked by public school teachers how we, at Monarch School, are able to assist previously struggling students in achieving academic success. One of the key components is the relationship students are able to build with their teachers. Teachers work on vocational crews, participate in therapeutic groups, and eat meals with the students. On Sundays, teachers can be found shooting hoops, picking berries, or playing board games with groups of students. These situations allow valuable opportunities for conversations which examine students' past behaviors and engage students in looking at what they truly desire for their futures and what actions they need to take to achieve those goals. Teachers also work one double shift a week to be available in the evenings for one-on-one or small group academic tutoring. I am grateful for a teaching staff that is committed to each individual student's success and to the Monarch School community as a whole.

~Jamie Jones, Academic Director~





What Is Challenge Night ... What Does It Mean?

The standing ovation lasted for over a minute and the feeling was one of joy, awe, respect, and deep connection. We had just witnessed a group of students present their Challenge Night and everyone in the building had been touched in some way by the presentations.

One of the more significant events on our campus is what we call the Challenge experience. It is a series of groups in which students explore the values that they want to live with and what negative beliefs and thoughts keep them from truly standing in those values. The peer group leaders collaborate to create challenges for each student.

The challenge is an opportunity to embody the values that the student wants to live with, while pushing through or working with the beliefs that have held them back. The students take the framework of the challenge given to them and create their own interpretation. For instance: They may be asked to create an original dance or movement to a piece of music, write and give a speech, sing a song, write a letter, create a play, or write and share a story. The students come up with a schedule of when to rehearse; find time in their busy schedules to write, paint, create, and practice their challenges, all while maintaining their studies and other responsibilities they hold around the school. By design, the process is challenging. It is also incredibly rewarding.

The results are in both the process of preparing, and the Challenge Night itself. One of the most powerful things we can do as human beings is to be witnessed when we are honest and vulnerable. Students who present their Challenges to the school do not perform. Rather, they embody those values that they hold as most important: Beauty, courage, love, perseverance, trust, passion, etc. It is powerful to be in the presence of the courage it takes to present oneself so openly.

Everyone who witnesses a Challenge Night comes away with the gift of experiencing others as they dare to be great. The contrast to what most other teenagers are doing on a Saturday night is not lost on the school and the students speak with pride about both witnessing and presenting on Challenge Night.

The next Challenge Night is Saturday, Feb. 2, when once again, the Drama building will be filled with that feeling of pride, connection, awe and love. If you listen, you just may hear the ovation.

~David Barth, Peer Leader, Nova's Aura~



Happy New Year From MPF

The *Monarch Parents Foundation (MPF)* sends this New Year wish to Monarch families; current and alumni, with hopes that you and your children will continue on positive paths of strengthening family relationships. The quote below reminds me of hallmarks of the Monarch School program:

I think that the best thing we can do for our children is to allow them to do things for themselves, allow them to be strong, allow them to experience life on their own terms . . . let them be better people, let them believe more in themselves.

-- C. Joy Bell

The Monarch journey is just the beginning of the process of students and parents creating a future together; one that is characterized by love, support and guidance. While at Monarch School, students learn to be accountable for their decisions and actions, and to develop effective strategies for dealing with the challenges of life. At the same time, it is equally important that parents do their own work, which may occur through various techniques, such as Center for Excellence (CFE) family counseling, personal counseling in your community, journaling, meditation, etc. For alumni families the Monarch tools continue to be useful while parenting our teen and young adult children as they travel toward becoming independent productive adults.

In 2013, the *MPF* will be there to help support parents. When the MPF board met in Sept. 2012, we created an agenda of goals including continuation of our key activities, such as the *Parent Mentor* program and coordination of the monthly *School-Parent Conference Calls*. Board member Inge Jechart will be updating the *MPF Web Site*, where Monarch parents have a chance to welcome new families to dialogue and provide support and information to one another. Under the direction of Amy Kekst you will receive our electronic newsletter, *The Butterfly Garden*. We encourage parents to contribute to it (contact Amy at amk1218@aol.com if interested!). Additionally, we are in the planning stages of creating one regional meeting this year which will take place in the San Francisco Bay Area (details to follow). As a board, we are grateful to alumni and current families who have generously donated to our 2012-2013 Annual Campaign, providing us with the means to provide financial support for families in need. In 2013, the MPF board hopes that other alumni families will become active contributors to the MPF, willing to give back to the current generation of families through their volunteerism. Best Wishes for the New Year from the MPF!

~Cheryl Messick – MPF Board President~

Spring Equinox, March 20, 2013

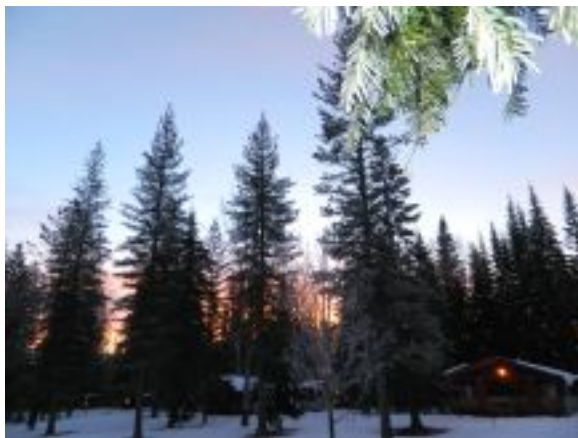
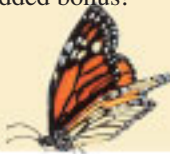
Prime Time for Indoor Fun

Long winter days of staying indoors can make anyone a little antsy, but the extra downtime can be a golden opportunity for self-enrichment. Are there any books you've been meaning to read? Movies you've always wanted to watch? Games you love but haven't played in years? Old or new hobbies you'd like to take up? Use your time inside to improve your mind while reaching out to others—and make some wonderful winter memories.



Fitness Tip: Tidy Tasks

Spring cleaning can be daunting, but it's actually a great way to get some exercise after a sedentary winter. While getting dust and dirt out of your house is good for your health, so is pushing a vacuum around and stretching to dust bookshelves and baseboards. Cleaning from room to room keeps you on your feet and burns calories. A tidy space that you can relax in at the end of the day is an added bonus!



Campus Sunrise!



Pond at the Garden House.



Family sledding fun on campus!

February 2013						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28		

- 2 Challenge Night
- 5 Parent Chat @ 4PM
- 8 1st Home Visit 2/8 - 2/12
3rd Home Visit 2/8 - 2/17
- 10 2nd Home Visit 2/10 - 2/16
- 18 Presidents' Day
- 21 Yellowstone Trip 2/21 - 2/25

March 2013						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

- 8 Lower School Seminar 3/8 - 3/10
- 15 End of Block Drama Performance (campus)
- 16 End of Block Drama Performance (Panida)
- 21 Winter Quarter Ends
- 22 Graduation Workshop 3/22 - 3/24
1st Home Visit 3/22 - 3/26
3rd Home Visit 3/22 - 3/31
- 24 2nd Home Visit 3/24 - 3/30
- 28 Gift Trip 3/28 - 3/31

April 2013						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				

- 1 Spring Quarter Begins
- 13 ACT Testing
- 27 Challenge Night
- 28 SSAT Testing for May Graduates

