THE LEXINGTON SCHOOL

NEWSLETTER

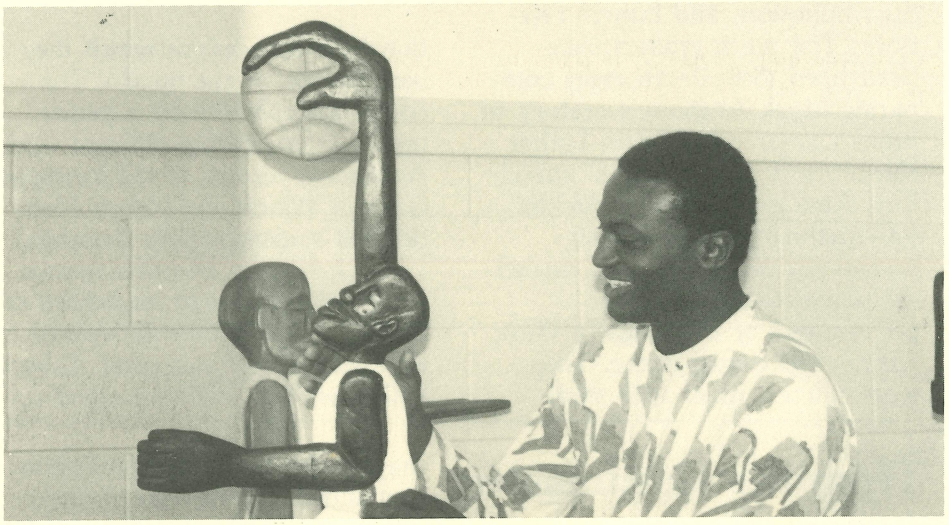
TLS

March 1988

Black History Month at TLS Stretches Students' Hearts and Minds

Dr. Carter Woodsen was a Black man, a Harvard trained Ph.D., and a former dean of Howard University. It was largely through his efforts in the early 1900's that Negro History Week was established. Many other Black scholars and freedom fighters joined Dr. Woodsen in working to get Negro History Week expanded to a national observance. Today it encompasses the entire month of February and is referred to as Black History Month.

The Lexington School joined with schools and colleges across the country in planning special events and studies in conjunction with Black History Month. This year's observance was exceptional in many ways.



LaVon Williams, athlete and artist

The appearance of the nationally acclaimed Boys' Choir of Harlem at The Lexington School on February 1 was, in Dr. Lowry's words, "the jewel in the crown of our Artists' Series." The entire school assembled in the theater for an hour-long performance which included works by Mozart and Handel, as well as contemporary music by Duke Ellington and other Black composers. Dance moves, in conjunction with song, delighted the audience in such popular favorites as "Mr. Bojangles." The appearance of the Boys' Choir at TLS was underwritten by a friend of the school.



Great Performances: The Harlem Boys' Choir.

Many lower school classes had projects which involved studying Black achievement in the sciences, humanities, the business world, athletic arenas, and various other areas of endeavor. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and his peace-

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making efforts were studied by one third grade class which also wrote poems to honor his memory. Some second graders combined their study of African communities with making African masks in art. This same class took a field trip to Godfrey's Antiques to see an extensive African art collection. They are practicing to perform a Masai folktale in March.

Language arts classes in middle and upper schools have been reading a variety of books with themes such as tolerance, discrimination, and human relations. The ninth graders were challenged to write an essay comparing Mark Anthony's oratory in Julius Caesar and Martin Luther King, Jr.'s "I have a dream" speech. This same group studied African polyrhythms as part of their humanities curriculum and treated the school to an assembly performance of the funga, a West African welcoming dance. They wore colorful robes with traditional African designs which they handprinted on the muslin. The dance was followed by a performance in an entirely different vein. A dramatic reading of the correspondence of Winnie and Nelson Mandela left students quietly thoughtful.



Taylor Keller, Andrew May, Susie Anderson, Jay Munson, Kipp Walker and Lee Brown model their African robes.

Black History Month's special events also included an exhibit of the works of former University of Kentucky basketball great, LaVon Williams. Mr. Williams spent an afternoon with us discussing his oil paintings and wood sculpture. He chatted casually in the gallery with small groups of students at every grade level. Everyone enjoyed hearing the stories behind the various pieces he brought to the show. The artist is represented by the Cincinnati gallery, Art Jones, Art on the Other Side of the Street. In the springtime, his studio is outdoors at Woodland Park.

From the Headmaster:

by David Lowry



Two fathers, responding to the transitory interest of their respective five-year-olds, each decided the time had come to teach his child to ride a two-wheeler. The first father was dismayed with the lack of skill and the lack of progress made in the first few lessons. Determined, nevertheless, he pushed and pulled, ran alongside, cheered and criticized, never for a moment allowing his child's waning interest and failing self-confidence to stand in the way of the next lesson.

The other father was equally dismayed with the initial few lessons and allowed the project to drop, only occasionally bringing out the bike for a walk along rather than a ride, for a cleaning rather than a lesson: more a slow familiarization.

By six, both youngsters were riding their two-wheelers. The first father knew that it was his steady pushing and task-mastering which had led to success. The second father was simply pleased that the "time had come."

The first child felt it a chore to ride the bike and was always suspicious of his skills, feeling them hard won. The second imagined himself flying across the face of the moon like Elliott in *E.T.*, knowing anything was possible.

There is a moral to this fable and in many ways it symbolizes our approach to preschool education at TLS, our feature article this issue.

Pork Bellies, Soybeans, or Yen?

The Lexington School was chosen to be one of two schools from Kentucky to participate in the Chicago Board of Trade's nationwide pilot project, "The Commodities Challenge." Ninth graders in John Fox's social studies class have been studying basic economic theory in preparation for research on the commodity of their choice. Once a selection has been made, they will track and trade that commodity for five weeks. The purpose of this "challenge" is to increase young people's interest in economics and the more practical applications of economic theory in the market place. After the trading period, the young brokers will prepare a report describing the outcome of their research and trading. National award winning reports will be chosen by the CBT. The winners and their advisors will travel, all expenses paid, to Chicago for an awards assembly, a visit to the floor of the CBT, sightseeing, and scholarship awards.

Preschool: Learning Our Way

The preschool programs at TLS are geared toward providing educational experiences that fit children's developmental needs. There is a Montessori classroom, a pre-kindergarten, and two kindergartens. Each classroom offers children a veritable smorgasbord of activities, all of which are nutritious for young minds and bodies which are trying to make sense of the world of sounds, numbers, letters, and abstractions. The variety of materials and equipment reflects an appreciation for the fact that the physical, social, emotional, and intellectual aspects of a child's make-up cannot be produced, speeded up, or ignored. There is ample time and space for every child to grow at a rate and in a pattern that is his or her very own.



Miss Brogan watches as Thomas Bell matches words to pictures.

Maria Montessori's methods of education are deeply rooted in developmental psychology. The specialized materials in the classroom and their organization resulted from years of observing children and concluding that they predictably pass through a series of sensitive periods during which they literally absorb the experiences which are the foundation for future learning. Within the limits of a set of ground rules, children in Montessori satisfy their curiosity and basic developmental needs in their "work." Three-year-olds, for example, spend a lot of time in the practical life area of the classroom. Activities like polishing silver, washing tables, spooning, pouring, folding, and cutting aid in the development of eye-hand coordination, sequencing, and independence. There is ample time in the child's day at school to become totally engrossed in an activity, and the luxury of no interruptions. Concentration develops as children repeat an activity to their hearts' content.



Laura Bibby knows that climbing is good for four-year-olds.

Miss Barbara Brogan, Montessori teacher at TLS for 14 years, notes that children ages three to six want to acquire knowledge of their own, to experience the world through their own efforts. Her role, therefore, is really that of a guide. She shows the children the proper use of the materials so that they can do things for themselves. She also observes that children choose the work which helps them to construct themselves. As each new skill is mastered, feelings of success result in the confidence to choose activities which are more sophisticated. By the time a child is ready for first grade, he or she has a toolbox full of language and arithmetical skills, an appreciation for art, science, music and geography, and the self-esteem to expand with only the sky as a limit.

The pre-kindergarten and kindergarten classes operate according to similar developmental principles; i.e., that the best learning occurs, not when children are sitting still and listening to an adult tell them things, but rather when they are actively exploring and interacting with materials and with each other. Everyone is offered a choice of free play activities every day. The toys and materials are safe, open-ended, and thought provoking, without being overstimulating. They are organized in the classroom in areas or centers such as housekeeping, blocks, puppets, sand or water table, art, reading, and listening. The teachers provide either structure or freedom within these different areas, depending on a child's own personal style and degree of readiness.



Gatewood Bell, Toft Rasmussen, and Elliott Miller are burying dinosaurs in the sand for a future archaeological dig.

There are regular routines to each day in preschool. This is very important because young children like a sense of order and to anticipate what is next. No matter what the children are engaged in, the opportunity to develop social skills such as



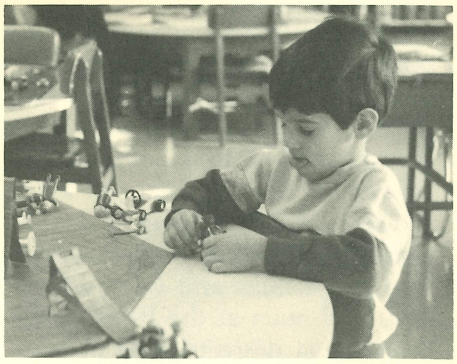
Lady Brie of Plemmons was a guest at the medieval feast.

cooperating, helping, and negotiating to solve a problem is usually there. These social skills are facilitated by the teacher, as needed.

Throughout the course of the year, preschool teachers are constantly evaluating and changing the learning areas in their classrooms to extend their children's initial exploration or to capitalize on their interests. They plan group activities to relate to a special timely theme like a holiday or the Olympics. The Middle Ages are fascinating for preschoolers, as are dinosaurs, so units on these two topics are regularly included in kindergarten. The medieval feast in Mrs. Barker's room has become a legend in itself. This year, knights and ladies built castles and designed coats of arms and tapestries. When the work was done, they broke bread together, sipped white grape juice, and enjoyed the entertainment of a court juggler. A dragon attended and was so well behaved that he was spared the traditional slaying.

No matter what the group is working on, the teachers and assistants are moving about the room, quietly asking questions about individual endeavors, offering suggestions rather than solutions when problems arise, and adding more complex ideas to a situation to expand children's experiences.

There are many opportunities in preschool to see how reading and writing are useful before more formal instruction in letter names, sounds, and word identification is introduced. These basic skills, like number skills, will develop when they are meaningful to children. In Mrs. Smothers' kindergarten, handmade alphabet puppets each have a whole week to star in activities that stimulate vocabulary and the internalization of language in a way that is well suited to kindergarteners.



Farra Alford is absorbed in imaginative play.

Imagination, verve, and a sense of humor are the hallmarks of the preschool faculty. They feel that it is a privelege to be part of the excitement that young children have for learning. Their children possess an unbelievable amount energy and enthusiasm, and it's contagious.

TWYSAA

There are many substance abuse curricula available for use in schools, but none is quite like "Talking with Your Students About Alcohol" (TWYSAA) says teacher, Tom Parlanti. It is a prevention program based on a behavior modification model. This model draws heavily from what has been learned from other successful health campaigns (like the one against heart disease) about lifestyle risk reduction. It applies this fund of knowledge, along with the principles of persuasive communication, to the prevention of all types of alcohol related problems. The emphasis is on alcohol because it is the most frequently used and abused drug by today's American youth. All skills taught in TWYSAA generalize to the prevention of other types of substance abuse.

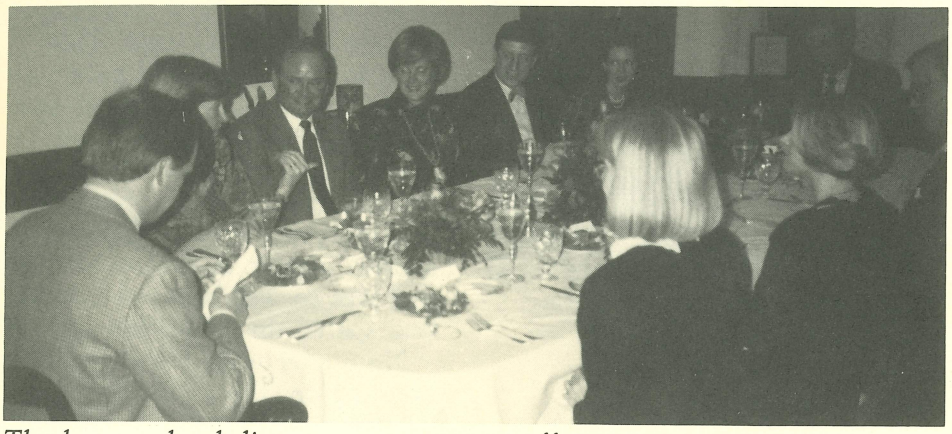
TWYSAA is being offered for the second year at TLS to students in grades 5,7, and 9. The classes are structured at each grade level to incorporate information appropriate to the age of the child, but the goal is the same for all students — to reduce the risk of an alcohol-related problem at any point in life. The program recognizes the need for parental input regarding values and expectations about drinking behavior. Take-home exercises are crucial to its success. There is also an emphasis at each grade level on the development of peer support, on "saying no" skills, and on becoming a good decision maker. These tools are valuable across the life span.

"Talking With Your Kids About Alcohol" (TWYKAA) is the parent program designed to be a companion course to the school based TWYSAA. A family's participation in the parent program enhances the benefits to a child. TWYKAA is being offered for the third time at TLS for interested parents beginning shortly after the spring break. More specific information regarding registration will be forthcoming.

The Lexington School admits students of any race, religion, color, sex, national or ethnic origin.

Cures for the Winter Blahs

Several of the live auction items from CELEBRATION '87 were put on the back burner by their purchasers and enjoyed just recently. The lower school faculty outdid themselves in the preparation and service of a gourmet dinner for twelve on January 30. The meal, which included shrimp puffs, veal porcini, and stuffed tomatoes, was enjoyed in the 200 year old manor house on Dixiana Farm. Past and present CELEBRATION chairmen, George Hoskins and Reynolds Bell, had seats at the head of the table. "Just desserts" was more than the hummingbird cake.



The lower school dinner was a gourmet affair.



Will the real Ms. Stith please stand up.

In December, Whitney Martin replaced Dr. Lowry as Head of the school for a morning. Things were topsy-turvy when students dressed as their favorite teacher and teachers dressed as students. The upper school had no homework due that morning, no tests, and they got to play games and chew gum in class. In April, Taylor Keller gets a chance to run the show. She's treating the lower and middle schoolers to a movie in the theater at 9:30 a.m., and the upper school to a dance in the gym. Fifties attire is *de rigueur* for this affair.

Who put the bop in the bop-she-bop-she-bop? Who put the ram in the rama-lama-ding-dong? These are very important questions for anyone who struggles with the forgetfulness of advancing age. To help bring it all back, guests of the high bidders for "Relive Your Prom Night," March 5, 1988, were doing the Stroll and the Cakewalk to the music of Hawkeye.

Committees are already hard at work for CELEBRATION '88. "Shoot for the Stars" was chosen as the winning theme for next year's party. This entry was submitted by the Robertsons, the Cutadeans, and Ms. Stith's advisor group. Congratulations to the winners and thank you to all who joined in the fun of the contest.

News Flash

On Friday, February 26, two upper school faculty members were arrested at lunch on the following charges:

Jack Brost — guilty of promoting disorderly conduct and a general state of confusion.

John Fox — guilty of assigning excessive homework and violating the civil rights of minors.

They were released several hours later from incarceration at Festival Market after a $250 contribution to the American Cancer Society. Bail was raised on the qt by a group of very charitable 7th and 9th graders.

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On February 27, a group of enthusiastic TLS fathers and faculty battled the WKYT Tube Jocks in a game of roundball. The tall and short of it was this

Tube Jocks	**67**
(with the help of Leroy Byrd III)	
TLS Stallions	**60**
(with the help of Dan Issel)	



Most Wanted: John Fox and Jack Brost.

Special thanks to Ted Holcomb for making all the arrangements and to Congressman Larry Hopkins for refereeing the game. The proceeds of this successful fund raiser will be used to add books to the library.

What's New With You?

Alumni, we'd like to know what you're up to. Please take a few minutes to complete the ALUMNI INFORMATION UPDATE below. We're interested in information about secondary schools, college news, marriage, births, employment, travel, honors, etc. Please return this form to: The Lexington School, Newsletter Office, 1050 Lane Allen Road, Lexington, Ky. 40504.

Name _____
First Middle Maiden Last

Class of _____

Home Address _____

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News about yourself or other alums

_____

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Would you be willing to be a class secretary?_____

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