

LNS TRADITIONS



Places to Experience in the Sculpture Park

"Two Big Black Hearts", 1985 - Jim Dine

"Like Dine's other multimedia work, Two Big Black Hearts are bronze casts of commonplace items, such as hands, faces, seashells, hammers, and other tools. The repetition of these items transforms them into vehicles of personal expression that evoke emotion. For Dine, the tools reflect childhood memories of the hardware store owned by his grandparents; the heart functions as "a sign that one can care, that there is a constant presence of feeling."

- thetrustees.org



Teachers:

Traditions provide an opportunity for teachers to plan as a faculty. We pause and reflect, "What is bubbling up for the children this year? How do we connect their bubbles to an all school experience?" The planning is a creative process, infused with imagination and humor as we collaborate and design the event. What do we know about these 3, 4, and 5 year olds and how do we weave that knowledge into the experiences we offer the children? There may be preparations for the children to engage with beforehand and traces of the experience in the studio afterwards. We are gifted with a child-like excitement and lightness anticipating the joy ahead!



Children:

“Traditions can unite and connect people, strengthen the bonds of a school family and build a strong community. They are an opportunity for everyone - children, families, and educators - to learn about themselves and others. They create a safe, warm, and secure environment where children are able to learn and grow.” - Rituals and Traditions: Fostering a Sense of Community in Preschool, by J. Howell & K.

By their second and third year at LNS, children are excited when it’s the day for celebrating a tradition. It becomes a ritual, giving the children a sense of knowing. Knowing feels good; it is comforting and empowering. At this year’s Magical Encounter, a child from Studio Red exclaimed, “I know this day; last year my mother was a butterfly!” Children often feel a sense of pride and excitement when celebrating a tradition that involves sharing their school with their families and each other. The experience is a community builder, especially for children who are new to LNS. They see each other as part of a *whole* school. Bonus: sometimes an extra special treat (i.e. popsicle, hot cocoa) is added to the celebration!



Families:

Traditions are a valued part of the cooperative experience at LNS. Families are invited to join in many of our school traditions such as May Day, Family Day, and the All School Celebration. In some instances, they get to play a part in those traditions, bringing animation and storytelling to Magical Encounters, or sharing the gift of instrument and song during the Lantern Walk. Families are also the creators of tradition here at LNS when they envision the Fall Fun day, complete with hayrides and picnics.

So what is it about school traditions that sparks joy? Is it the feeling of “magic” and “wonder”? Is it watching our children light up in discovery? Is it the togetherness we experience with our own family and others?

The familiarity of a beloved tradition brings us back to our own childhood. These are memories which evoke a sense of time, place, and deep feeling. We can recall it all with one simple mention. One of the biggest joys at LNS is not only witnessing our children creating new memories, but also knowing that these are shared memories which further strengthen the home-school connection.

In our little village of LNS, how do we keep our balance?

♪ “TRADITIONS!” ♪

Committee Share:

It is the work of our many parent committees that makes our school function. It's how our cooperative school is designed. Each month we will highlight the work of a committee. Thank you Andrew West for being the first chair to volunteer!

For those who don't know me, my name is Andrew West (parent to Elin; Purple) and I'm the chair of the LNS Diversity Equity and Inclusion (DEI) committee. The DEI committee members - Paula Hinchliffe (teacher/parent to Ollie; Red), Adrian Christie (parent to Sylvie; Red), and Hannah Flint (parent to Laura; Red), and I - meet throughout the year to discuss DEI at LNS, plan events, and think about ways to educate and engage our community.

People have different definitions of what diversity or DEI (or DEIB or DEIJ, etc.) means. To us, DEI work at LNS is an acknowledgement and celebration of the wide spectrum of differences that human beings bring to any community. Some of us bring visible differences to our community based on our backgrounds or abilities, but many of us bring differences to LNS that are not always visible; at LNS we want everyone to feel welcomed, and acknowledged as valuable parts of our diverse community.

As a committee, our goals for the year include, but are not limited to, hosting/organizing another DEI Reverse Book Fair in the Spring (similar to last year; stay tuned), using our DEI budget to bring in a speaker/educator for a DEI-themed faculty/staff professional development event, and building/collecting/curating a list of DEI-related resources for the LNS community. For the latter, we are asking the entire LNS community for help.

If you have resources related to DEI that you think would be useful, please let us know. These resources could include lists of books, art materials, gifts, programs at organizations/schools in the area, etc. One of our committee members will reach out to the community in the next month to formally ask for your help. In addition, if you hear of upcoming DEI-related (even loosely) events in the area, please send those to us so we can compile them and include them on our resource list and in a future newsletter. If you ever want to chat, please reach out to one of us anytime.

If any committee would like to be featured in an upcoming newsletter, please reach out to Nancy or Sisy (or we'll find you 😊).

Serendipitously, as we were about to publish this newsletter, Jona (who attended LNS 2021-23) returned for a visit carrying her "favorite fairy wand", a creation from May Day 2023!

