



WHAT'S THAT?



WISE WAYS



COMING UP THIS
SPRING

MHFC SPRING NEWSLETTER



**ROBOTICS
ACADEMY**

SUMMER EXTRA-
CURRICULAR CLASSES



Eco-Schools USA
NATIONAL WILDLIFE FEDERATION®

NATURE/ GARDENING



FAMILY 3K



FAMILY OUTING
IDEAS

What's That You're Building?

By Barbara Nelson

MHFC is expanding and building a new building for our elementary students, which will eventually serve to educate students through 6th grade. With our plans to expand, some may ask why we would want to further develop an upper elementary, when our school resides in an area that has one of the highest district rankings in Texas. This is a great question and I hope to shed light on our motives for expanding.

The current mainstream educational system has been in effect for more than a century and, although the world has changed, the system has not. Social, cultural and economic factors greatly influenced the design of our current public educational system. In the late 1800's, many agricultural societies began migrating to the larger cities, where the opportunity for employment was most abundant. The "industrial revolution" brought about a need for mass-production, and created a system for producing these products. This system focused on an "assembly line" infrastructure. Manufacturers were producing large quantities of products that fit a particular mold, which could easily be created using a uniform, systematic approach. This proved to be very effective as it merged efficiency with productivity and provided a strong economy. Our current educational system was also designed using the "assembly line" model. At its time of development, there was a great need for a standard level of education, and for the education to be made available on a large scale. The "products" (students who attended public schools) were designed to be uniform, through acquisition of the same basic knowledge. During this era, job markets were easily identified and the goal of our educational system fit the demands of that time. For decades, this model served its purpose well and provided what the industries needed.

As time has progressed, the needs of society have changed. We are entering a new era, typically coined the "digital revolution". Innovation and technological advances have created industries that were never before imagined. The future is evolving so rapidly that it's not as easy as it used to be to identify our future job markets. Preparing our students for a different era requires an alternative method of education- an educational system designed to fit the child's development, rather than societal needs. Montessori is one such system, designed to meet the physical, psychological, social and cognitive development of the child.

Take for example, the pre-school and elementary aged child. Children at this age are in their most "formative years" when the brain is in its most rapid period of development. This period of formation becomes the foundation for which all future learning exists. Decades of research in neuroscience and child development prove that learning occurs best through active involvement. Children need movement, play, exploration, social interaction and hands-on activities to best learn. However, our mainstream educational system has children (as young as 4) sitting passively in classrooms that limit mobility, limit peer interaction, limit outside exploration and focus on highly structured, formal academic instruction. While some

districts (KISD, for example) are reporting high-test results for academic achievement, I question how this is actually benefiting students. What troubles me most is not what the child is learning, but what the child is not learning – the emphasis is on obtaining pre-defined academic standards rather than focusing on developing the whole person, to reach their fullest potential

Opportunities to build skills necessary for future success – social and emotional abilities, problem solving, creativity, self-regulation, self-initiative, curiosity and imagination, are greatly reduced by the mere structure of traditional classrooms. When learning systems are designed by incorporating information obtained through the research of neuroscience and child development, students will be better prepared as humans, to meet the unimaginable demands of our future.

In tandem with changing the structure of the school system, it is equally important to address understanding of child development and education. Adults (parents and teachers) are prone to thinking that “straight A’s” are a sign of a good education. This is understandable, being that most adults are products of the traditional educational system. School districts appeal to this way of thinking by recognizing teachers and schools with high achievement through standardized testing. However, studies are beginning to show that placing a strong emphasis on academics alone is not yielding the results that our future society needs. Corporations are no longer looking to hire individuals who follow instructions and just do as their told; rather, they seek individuals who have emotional intelligence, self-initiative, purpose, creativity and global diversity.

By educating adults in the importance of an education system based on the needs of children and the future, there is hope that innovating the education system from the ground up (parent driven), rather than from the top down (political driven) will result in a system focused on the development of the whole child, which will produce contributing members of society who meet the ever-changing demands of our future.

Montessori is one of many alternative methods of education. Because it is based on the development of the person, it will never be outdated – its aim will always be to facilitate individual growth and development and take our students in directions never imagined. This is what motivates our expansion - we believe wholeheartedly in our future and in the future of our students. Our ultimate goal is to best prepare our leaders of tomorrow.

PARENT ASSOCIATION

The Parent Association has some fantastic activities planned for this Spring!!!

*Meet up at All Star Grill	April 6th	6 pm
*10th Anniversary International Picnic/ Earth Day	April 22nd	
*Blessington Farm Meet-up	May 21st	8:30 am

Please join us for our upcoming PA meetings. Childcare is provided!
April 12th & May 10th 5-6 pm

SUMMER EXTRA-CURRICULAR CLASSES



“Amped Kids Fitness” will be offering an extra curricular gymnastics class on Mondays at 2:30 p.m. The fees will be \$59.00 a month with a registration fee of \$15.

For more information, or to register please contact Chris Phillips at 713-369-5215
www.ampedkidsfitness.com



“American Robotics Academy” will be offering extra curricular classes this summer on Thursdays from 2:30- 3:30 (for ages 4-5) and 3:45-4:45 for ages (6-9). The classes will run for 9 weeks with a cost of \$125/student.

If there is enough interest, classes may be offered on both Tuesdays and Thursdays.

For more information, or to register please contact americanroboticsacademy@gmail.com or call 281- 599-7626

FAMILY FUN RUN

PLEASE JOIN US,
ALL PROCEEDS WILL GO TO MEFI!



JOIN US FOR A DAY OF HEALTHY FAMILY FUN WHILE SUPPORTING A GREAT CAUSE. IT'S GOING TO BE A BLAST!

SATURDAY, APRIL 30TH at Priority ER in Seven Meadows
Run/Walk **STARTS AT 9:30AM** out of the Priority ER parking lot

REGISTER ONLINE TODAY
at www.priorityer.com under Community Calendar

EARLY REGISTRATION PRICING IS:
\$20 per adult
\$10 per child
or Family 4 pack for \$50.

PRICE WILL INCREASE MARCH 16 TO:
\$25 per adult
\$15 per child
Family 4 pack for \$70.

Families/participants will run/walk through the Seven Meadows neighborhood and return back to the Priority ER parking lot.

We will have after-run refreshments and entertainment for the whole family!

Proceeds will go to Montessori House Scholarship and Education Fund



ECO SCHOOL



The Eco-Schools program was started in 1994 by the [Foundation for Environmental Education](#) (FEE) with support by the European Commission. It was identified by the [United Nations Environment Program](#) (UNEP) as a model initiative for Education for Sustainable Development in 2003. Currently, there are over 59 countries around the world participating in the program.

Eco-Schools USA is a holistic program. It strives to make environmental awareness and action an intrinsic part of the life and culture of a school, including students, teachers, administrative staff, non-teaching staff and parents, as well as the local community. Eco-Schools USA works to extend learning beyond the classroom and develop responsible environmental attitudes and commitments, both at home and in the wider community.

Schools that are certified in the program undergo a thorough application process and comprehensive evaluation of their school. The Eco-Schools USA program is made up of [seven steps](#), incorporating [a variety of environmental areas of focus \(or pathways\)](#). After implementing the seven steps, we plan to apply for the [Bronze Award](#).

We are proud to become an Eco-School and have already accomplished the first four steps. Over the past couple of months, we have established an *Eco-Action Team* comprised of teachers, students, staff and parent volunteers. We have completed an *Environmental Audit/Review* of our school and have selected **Waste & Consumption** pathway to be our primary focus. We have developed and an achievable *Eco-Action plan*. And we are currently *Monitoring and Evaluating* our progress in reducing, reusing, recycling our waste and consumption. In particular, we are excited about expanding our recycling and composting efforts and making it a part of our daily routine. Look out for some green cones in the garden! Our students will be participating with hands on learning about how they can make a difference in tackling the problem of waste, and think of the 3R's: Reduce, Reuse, and Recycle.

- Can we **reduce** the waste generated in the first place?
- If not, can we **reuse** it?
- If we can't reuse it, can we **recycle** it?

Look out for the Eco-School logo at the school. Please look for emails about Earth week (April 18-22) activities, culminating on April 22nd, Earth Day at our Annual Picnic. If you are interested in more information on the Eco-Action team or Earth Day activities, please Ms. Norma: norma@mhfcschool.com We need the help of parents - big or small - in this endeavor and you can truly make a difference. This will be a continual effort for our school and an exciting time to get involved with your children as we strive to become a green school!

Here are a couple of links to fun Earth day events coming up in Houston that we encourage our families to attend with your children:

- [Houston Earth Day](#) April 16th. [Keep Houston Beautiful Day](#) April 9th



OUTING IDEAS



Houston Children's Festival

April 23 & 24, 2016 10:30 am – 6:30 pm
Downtown Houston

houstonchildrensfestival.com



Earth Day Houston

April 16th 11 am - 5 pm
Sam Houston Park (1000 Bagby Street) downtown

Earth Day Houston, is the Houston area's premier celebration of our planet at Sam Houston Park. The FREE one-day celebration will focus on the merits of mindful, sustainable living while educating and encouraging Houstonians to do their part to preserve, conserve and enhance our city and the Earth. Earth Day Houston showcases more than 100 booths and exhibits, each educating visitors on how they can make Houston a greener place to live.

www.earthdayhouston.org



Houston Japan Fest

April 16th and 17th
Herman Park

The mission of Houston Japan Fest is to educate guests about Japanese and Japanese American Culture and Traditions through participating in a fascinating and family-friendly festival.

www.houstonjapanfest.org



WISE WAYS

Excerpts from Pam's Blog 'Wise Ways' on subjects of interest to families with children of all ages

Let's Invent!

By Pam Nelson

Greetings Inventive Minds:

I'm a Makerspace Junkie. It started a couple of years ago when I began bringing empty toilet paper and paper towel rolls to our School for the young students to do whatever they wanted to do with them. Then came the duct tape, twine, empty egg cartons, packing materials, odd parts, recycled materials, masking tape, rulers, scissors etc.

Soon we marveled at the inventions that spewed forth from the minds of these youngsters. They were building things that hadn't been invented yet. They gave them names that hadn't been thought of before. They were bringing alive this quote from Nobel Prize winner Albert Szent-Gyorgyi..."Discovery is seeing what everybody else has seen, and thinking what nobody else has thought."

The creation box grew to a shelf and that grew to a techy space area in our school's morning room where we now have added tables to take apart phones, toasters, bread machines and overhead projectors. Broken electronics are prizes to be coveted. Adding this to our original collections of used materials keeps ages 3 to 9 quite busy.

Along with learning what's inside things and how they work, the young inventors may someday re-assemble, re-invent, restore and make workable again those things that at one time lay in pieces.

BUT EVEN IF THEY NEVER DO, they have taught themselves something they didn't know the day before.

So, I encourage families to check the internet site that have loads of Makerspace ideas, or just gather your scraps and recyclables and let your child loose on them.

Turn off the TV and the video games and let another quote from Albert Szent-Gyorgyi come true..."A discovery is said to be an accident meeting a prepared mind."

Stay Wise!

COMING UP:

Mar 22	Eco Team meeting	7:30 - 8:30 am
Mar 25	Full School Closure for Good Friday	
April 6	Meet up at All Stars Grill	6 pm
April 8	Eco Team meeting	7:30 - 8:30 am
April 12	Parent Association Meeting	5-6 pm
April 12	Book Club	6-7 pm
April 14	Parent Coffee	8:30— 9:30 am
April 18-22	Earth Week	
April 22	10th Anniversary Picnic / Earth Day (George Bush Park)	
April 29	Early Release (Extended Day)	
April 29	Eco Team meeting	12:15 - 1:15 pm
April 30	Fun Run at Priority ER	8 am
May 10	Parent Association Meeting	5-6 pm
May 12	Parent Coffee	8:30 - 9:30 am
May 13	Eco Team meeting	7:30 - 8:30 am
May 20	Moving Up Ceremony	9:30 - 10:30 am
May 21	Blessington Farm Meet-up	8:30 - 9:30 am
May 27	Early Release (Extended Day)	
May 27	Last Day of the Spring Semester	
May 30	Memorial Day - Full School Closure	
May 31-Jun 3	Montessori Holiday (Full Day students only)	
June 6	First day of summer session 1	

LOOKING BACK



LOOKING BACK



LOOKING BACK



Do you follow us on Facebook? We now have two pages:

Montessori House for Children

&

Montessori House Elementary



The Boy Scouts Book Drive was a great success!

With your help they collected 1,709 books for donation.

A Special Thanks To All Our Volunteers

Your contributions to the school are much appreciated!

Parent Readers, Library Parents, Parent Coffee Volunteers

Class Volunteers, Parent Association