



THE IMPORTANCE OF THE FINAL YEAR IN EC



WISE BITS



PARENT ASSOCIATION OF VOLUNTEERS (PAV)

MHFC Winter Newsletter



ECO ACTION TEAM



NATURE/ GARDENING



COMING UP.....



WINTER PARENT COFFEE

PAV

PARENTS ASSOCIATION OF VOLUNTEERS



Season's Greetings!

Over the first half of the school year, the Parents Association of Volunteers (PAV) events and activities have been well attended and successful on many counts. At Exploration Park in the fall, and All Stars Family Grill in the winter, the children had fun playing while parents made new friends and connected with old ones at school wide meet ups. On campus, parents offer their many gifts and talents to build a vibrant school community. Parent coffee hostesses brought delicious treats to share. Remarkably, the monthly coffees have grown popular with 20+ attendees, outgrowing the lobby area!

All our room parents are fantastic! They demonstrate leadership and creativity in helping the teachers, and they provide ideas and advice at monthly PAV meetings. Some expanded the role by planning meet ups for each classroom. Our care committee sends handwritten notes and gifts to our families to express sentiments that befit the occasion. Our parent volunteers warmly greet and usher our young students through the school doors at the drive-through drop off. They engage and excite our children when they read books to the class. They encourage our budding readers while they listen to them read one on one. They scour the City's public libraries thoughtfully selecting seasonal classroom books. They offer their time and creativity with event planning, and have fun with fundraising activities. And they do much more.

We recognize the Eco-Action team, led by Dipa Brahmhatt, in their efforts of promoting wildlife protection, sustainability, and an environmental education school-wide. The team is on their way to earn a second Eco-School Award, a National Wildlife Federation program. And we must recognize our parent volunteers, Reisha Bouska and Stacey Ripple, who are truly dedicated to building a "Field of Dreams" on the Elementary School play yard.

The PAV is on target with the fundraising goals for the Montessori Education Fund, Inc. (MEFI), a 501-C3 non profit which is chartered to offer a wide range of educational services to our community. In celebration of the inaugural year for the Elementary School building, a Legacy Wall was created - a permanent ceramic tile installation of our children's handprints and artwork. Parent volunteers assisted all the children with creating original artwork. Most families participated in the Legacy Wall fundraiser; proceeds were \$2700.

We held our 3rd annual Read Around the World Book Fair. Parent volunteers did an amazing job at decorating, organizing, and helping the children select their wish list books throughout the week. A record number of books were purchased and donated - estimated proceeds were about \$1300, and over 140 books were donated to help build classroom libraries!

Our MEFI Annual Campaign is ongoing until we achieve the goal of \$7000. Thus far, we have reached 80% of our target - \$1200 to go! This fund allows for parent workshops, guest speakers, teacher training, and tuition assistance.

We are super excited for 2017. Stay tuned and read the weekly newsblasts. In the meantime, we hope you will continue to make connections, and build our shared Montessori community. If you haven't been able to attend the events and meetings, then come next year because we need you! New faces and ideas are welcome all year round.

Happy Holidays and Happy New Year!!

Grace Young Baechle, President
Amira Plascencia, Secretary

Hanna Ottosson, Vice President
Alessandra Carvalho, Treasurer

NATURE/GARDENING

The Elementary Field of Dreams

By Stacey Ripple

I hope that everyone has had a chance to "peek in" and see the progress that Reisha and I have been making on the Field of Dreams. Finally, we see a light at the end of a once "dirt and mud" tunnel. Things are really shaping up and the kids have been able to play in the grass this week!

Because of the storms forecasted for this weekend, it is not possible for us to have a "volunteer to work day" on Saturday.



Many of you have asked if there are any plants or flowers needed? The simple answer is YES! We are finally at the point where we can plant herbs, veggies and annuals (flowers) in a few places.

We have a few pansies growing in two of the flower garden sections. The butterflies are starting to come in for a visit and we even have a few lady bugs coming to visit as well.



IF you would like to, we could really use some herbs, vegetables, and annuals to plant "here and there" throughout the garden area. Any herbs, vegetables, plants or flowers donated will be planted before the Winter Break. We will also do our best to harvest these surviving items in our big spring family planting day. Please feel free to drop items off at either of the drive thru times, or come by and see us while we are working in the back. Typically one of us is back there (or near by) after drive thru and until 4pm (we do leave and take a short lunch break most days). If you don't see us, you can leave the items on the back patio inside the gate and let one of the

teachers know it is for us and will we take care to put it in the proper place. Although fall / winter is not the most optimal time to plant, we really want to have some items in the gardens for the children to take care of and to get the root systems started. We have been told by Master Naturalists and Master Gardeners to go ahead and start the process, so we are trying to move forward.

The children have already started taking an active roll in watering the few plants, herbs, fruit trees, butterfly trees and flowers that we currently have in the ground. As we finish more areas their involvement will only grow in the upkeep and continued success of the garden areas.

As you may have noticed, we have been planting a few things around the Field of Dreams. Though they may look as if they are dying, Reisha and I have been assured that we are doing the right thing and their root systems are taking hold and will bounce back at the proper time. Only time will tell.



In the Spring, we will organize a BIG Family

Garden Day so that everyone can come out and help work in the gardens and lend a hand in its development.

Thank you for any items you can donate and help us populate the gardens. Please do not feel obligated to go out and buy items. We understand that the holiday season is upon us and everyone has other obligations going on as well. If you can help, we THANK YOU. If you cannot help, we still THANK YOU for your continued support and enthusiasm for the ongoing Field of Dreams Project!

All of you are important to our school and the many activities that are going on around us.

Thank you again for your support,

Reisha Bouska and Stacey Ripple

THE FINAL YEAR IN EARLY CHILDHOOD

The Importance of the final year in Early Childhood

By Sandy Kabarwal



Montessori education consists of multi-age level classrooms, which are focused for optimal development, growth and challenge for the individual child. These multi-age level classrooms reflect the levels of human development. Dr. Montessori observed that development and learning seemed to cycle around the years of 0-3, 3-6, and 6-9. The three-year cycle is important because it allows the child to progress through various stages of growth and development. The Montessori's method is optimal when a child experiences all three years of the cycle.

First year students are the explorers and are typically three- four year olds. Their developmental needs are to explore their environment. The Montessori classroom becomes their world to explore, as they refine their senses and practice concentration. These skills lay the groundwork for their ability to think and learn. They learn to take responsibility for themselves and for their work, which in turn develops the good work habits and enables their future academic success.

Second year students, typically four-five year olds, are the experimenters. They are now turning their focus outward, becoming more interested in their classmates and the social world of school. Their independence starts growing and academics are very interesting to the child. They continue to practice their independent work habits and may do much of their work in small groups, rather than independently.

Third year students, typically five-six year olds, are the Leaders. These children have a strong

background in all areas of the classroom and are able to work entirely independently. They are developmentally ready to become leaders and peer teachers, both with academics and social skills. As the five year old proudly teaches lesson to their younger classmate, they are reinforcing their knowledge of the material they have mastered. This creates a greater level of understanding and develops more confidence in their leadership abilities. They may take responsibilities such as reading to children in the classroom, assist teachers



with organizing projects; participate in community volunteer work leading to confidence and a positive self-esteem. These are truly, valuable life lesson.



It is a very exciting, challenging and rewarding time for all the final year students. Most have spent two years building skills and learning their way around the class. They know the daily routines inside and out; their teachers work with their strengths and encourage them to take on new challenges. They have formed friendships and developed a wide base of knowledge in each area of the classroom. They start exploring extensions of the activities in the classroom, leading to the development of critical thinking skills, self-direction, cooperative learning, time management, and leadership. As they work to improve these skills during the 3-year cycle, they learn that they are capable and independent to try more complex work. This is the time when many of the earlier lessons come together and become a permanent part of the young child's understanding.

The child continues to set the pace for his or her own education and developmental growth during the final year. This is the final year where the student's move from completion of concrete materials and that leads into the discovery of abstract materials

By allowing your child to complete the 3-year cycle of Montessori curriculum, you have given them strong educational roots, from which to grow and blossom. They had a chance to truly internalize their lessons and are prepared with the tools to excel in any environment and provided opportunities to develop cooperative work skills and leadership qualities.

Dr. Maria Montessori doesn't view Final (Kindergarten) year as a beginning of an Elementary Education but rather as a completion of Early Childhood Curriculum.



"They have learned how to learn."

ECO ACTION TEAM

Behold Biodiversity

By Dipa

As the year comes to end the eco action team wanted to share their journey. We began with recruiting parents and students to engage in a greener tomorrow. We had the opportunity to conduct a pilot biodiversity audit with the elementary students. The children enjoyed identifying native plants and animal species in their ecosystem. We realized that Biodiversity was the pathway best for our school because, the students loved identifying animal species and the new elementary schoolyard would be completed under “The field of Dreams”. “The field of Dreams” is an endeavor to create the elementary school yard under Reisha’s leadership. It is a labor of love, created by volunteers love for nature and children. We currently have 26 students and 22 adults who are actively engaged in the Eco Action Team.

On September 14th 2016, Elementary students participating in Biodiversity pre-audit and raising their hands to participate in Eco Action Team

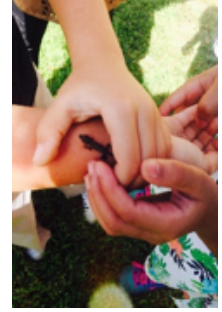
In the first meeting we identified our goals and broke up into 5 groups. The goals that were identified were: 1) Complete the biodiversity audits; 2) Help with the “Field of Dreams”; 3) Complete weighing trash to make sure we are keeping up with recycling efforts; 4) Complete biodiversity eco logo and eco code; 5) Incorporate biodiversity into the curriculum and lastly; 6) reach within the Montessori community and outside community engaged in biodiversity and reduction of waste. To



accomplish these goals 5 groups were created, the Biodiversity group, the Consumption and Waste group, the Community group, the Curriculum group and the Dissemination of Information group.

The groups have been active completing their goals, with elementary students, and each other, on a regular basis. Below is a photographic journey of some of their accomplishments.

October 5th 2016, elementary students identifying animal species to complete biodiversity audit.



October 22nd 2016, DIY day for field of dreams. Labor of love from students, educators and parent volunteers. The students painted bird houses, tool boxes and made peddle stones. A wonderful celebration of MEFI community with nature and art.



November 16th 2016. The consumption and waste group completing waste audit in elementary backyard.

November 18th 2016 the final vote for Biodiversity eco code was voted by the members. The winner phase was "BEHOLD BIODIVERSITY". The elementary class also completed the eco school logo which will shortly be posted around the school.

As the year ends we still have much to do and much to learn from each other. We learned that our meetings need to be child centered and action oriented. In our last meeting the students worked on thank you cards, to thank all those that made the "Field of Dreams" come alive. Our next meeting will be in December 16th from 12:00 PM to 1:00 PM. This meeting will be led by Mr. Robert and Ms. Margie who will engage elementary students in creating a biodiversity journal.

Enjoy every moment and indulge your children to BEHOLD BIODIVERSITY.

Greenly yours,

The Eco Action Team classrooms



WISE BITS

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

GARAGES AS GENIUS PERCOLATORS

Greetings parents and friends of future inventors,

Who would guess that a garage would be the starting point for business start-ups and inventions? Did you know the following companies started in garages: Amazon, Apple, Disney, Google, Harley Davidson, Hewlett-Packard, Lotus Cars, Maglite, Mattel and Yankee Candle Company?

What is it about a garage that invites invention, free thinking, tinkering, exploration and innovation? For your answer, take a look at your own garage. This time look at it through the eyes of a young person who has the perspective to look at things as they might be, not just as they are.

Young people daydream more, look at things through their own 'viewers' and are capable of dismantling and re-engineering in a variety of ways, often leading to entirely new designs. If you have a child at home, the best way to encourage their latent gift of invention is to allow access and time to explore and use safe, interesting and unusual materials in a space that can be dedicated to working without interruption and without usurping common family space. No to a kitchen table, YES to a garage.

In care you think a child is too young to be capable of making world changing inventions, let me introduce you to Taylor Wilson. At 10 years old, Taylor invented a nuclear fusion reactor in his parents' garage. If you'd like to know more about him, "Google" him and check out the TED talk through this link:

https://www.ted.com/talks/taylor_wilson_yup_i_built_a_nuclear_fusion_reactor

We believe it is vitally important for all young people to have a tinker space and materials to make things that have not yet been created. Parents, you can provide space, recycled materials and scraps while waiting for the nuclear fusion reactor to be built at your house.

Stay Wise!

COMING UP...

Dec 8	Visiting Silhouette Artist	
Dec 10	Winter Parent Coffee and Open House (Saturday!) A Silhouette artist will be cutting family and sibling silhouettes	9:00 - 10:30 am
Dec 13	PAV Meeting (childcare provided for enrolled students)	5:00 - 6:00 pm
Dec 13	Positive Parenting Book Club	6:30 - 7:30 pm
Dec 16	Early Release / Toddler (extended day) Early Release / EC and Elementary (extended day)	11:30 am 12:00 pm
Dec 19 - 30	Winter Break (Full School Closure)	
Jan 2	Montessori Holiday Full Day Students Only	
Jan 3	1st day of the Academic Spring Semester	
Jan 10	PAV Meeting (childcare provided for enrolled students)	5:00 - 6:00 pm
Jan 10	Positive Parenting Book Club	6:30 - 7:30 pm
Jan 12	Parent Coffee	8:30 - 9:30 am
Jan 14	MH Elementary Grand Opening	7:00 - 9:00 pm
Jan 16	Montessori Holiday, Full Day students only	
Jan 19	Paloma Trails Visit	
Jan 27	Early Release / Toddler (extended day) Early Release / EC and Elementary (extended day)	11:30 am 12:00 pm

*please note: additional classroom specific events can be found on MRX

**Eco-School Action Team Meeting dates and times TBD

MH Elementary Grand Opening!

Saturday, January 14th, 7-9 pm

Come join us for an evening of celebration!

(parents only please)



Winter Parent Coffee & Open House

We Invite You!

Bring a friend

Saturday, Dec 10th, 9am -10:30am

Door Prizes and tours

Have a family silhouette done!
for more information please contact: theresa@mhfc.school.com

**Montessori House
For Children**
Toddler Through Elementary

HANDWORK STUDIO

Montessori House's Handwork Studio-Open Now

True education aims to serve the needs of the whole human being. Head, heart and hands are brought into a particular relationship with each other in the practice of handwork. Students can use their hands to learn, express themselves, and provide a great sense of satisfaction and achievement in their work.

Montessori House Elementary School has opened its new building, and within that building we have dedicated a studio space to what is now the Montessori House Elementary Handwork Studio! We are initially focusing on fiber arts, and our goal is to grow into offering Montessori House Elementary students the unique opportunity to have pottery, wood working, gardening, homesteading, "make"ing, and other creative hand crafts woven into their Montessori education.

This studio will also be offering workshops to homeschoolers, after schoolers, and the community starting in January, 2017 through a partnerships with Handmade Workshops. Information coming soon on upcoming workshops.

Fiber Arts

Children will interact in fiber in a variety of ways, ranging from felting with wool, knitting, weaving, crocheting, hand and machine sewing, to a variety of other fun fiber-related projects ranging in complexity and nature.



Pottery

Clay's natural appeal of being a medium where there is no separation between the student and their work, gives considerable freedom to the student to work and rework the clay. The emphasis will be placed on choosing projects that allow the student to work on techniques that are accomplished through handbuilding clay.



Woodwork

Woodworking projects will allow the child to learn the fundamentals of using hand tools to create practical projects. Children will not only learn the craft of hand woodwork, but also learn to respect the tools, gain patience, perseverance, and deep pride in their work.



Garden & Homestead

Homesteading and homemaking workshops will explore skills that were once standard practices. Workshops offered will include, but are not limited to, soap making, medicinal and organic gardening, food preserving methods (fermenting, pickling, preserving), bread making, cheese making, and seasonal workshops.



MAKEing

Maker workshops are free flowing, creative environments that support the revolutionary maker movement where young makers can play, experiment, invent, tinker, engineer, construct, deconstruct, test, observe, share, and improve their way through learning by doing! Powerful learning takes place as a maker creates and invents planned and open ended projects with high and low tech gadgets, gears, recycled materials, tools, craft supplies, electronic parts, and so on....



LOOKING BACK



