



2019 Spring Newsletter

MONTESSORI HOUSE FOR CHILDREN
& ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

March Community & School-Wide Events:

- ◆ Summer Camp Registration
- ◆ Parent Enrichment, Toddler Community: Learn effective tips on how to turn 'Terrible Two's' into Amazing Two's!
- ◆ Open House – Invite a Friend Referral Program
- ◆ Community Meet Up: Exploration Park



2019/2020 REFERRAL PROGRAM

When you refer a friend or family member, you will receive a \$100 credit towards your next month's tuition upon their enrollment. Your referral will also receive a \$100 credit towards their first month's tuition.

**SO BE SURE TO INVITE A FRIEND
TO THE OPEN HOUSE!**



NATURE'S CLASSROOM INSTITUTE

New program coming to Elementary
in 2018/2019 school year.

See page 8!

In this issue:

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A Letter from HOS...

Something to chew on...

Our Upper Elementary students serve as our school's "Eco Action Team" and they actively work to make our school greener! Recently, our Waste & Consumption team weighed the school's trash in an effort to understand where improvements are most needed. What they discovered is that our school, as a whole, wastes large amounts of food!

We learned that the Toddler community has the least amount of wasted food and the Elementary community wastes the greatest amount. It is ironic, that our toddler parents appear to be most concerned about their child's diet - Is my child eating enough at school? How can I get my child to eat at home? Why is my child such a 'picky eater'? Yet, it is our toddler community that wastes the least amount of food. In fact, we are often amazed at the amount and variety of foods our toddlers are gobbling up! They love fresh fruits and vegetables, and they show great interest and willingness to try new foods being introduced!



Looking at the Elementary school, we find quite the opposite. Here, students are more socially aware of the 'in foods' (those that are most widely advertised through media) and unfortunately, many have decided that whole and natural foods don't taste as good. Our Eco-Team, while conducting their 'study' (sorting through bags of trash), found whole apples, whole sandwiches and unopened pre-packaged foods – not saved, just discarded! We asked, 'how could this be, why not save the food for later?' and the overwhelming answer was "we don't want to get in trouble (from our parents), for not eating our food.

The task for our upper elementary students was to ask, "how can we reduce the amount of food being wasted in our school?" Here are their ideas:

- Have children pack their own lunches.
- Bring home uneaten food.
- Have better tasting food from the lunch provider.

Here's what they are doing about it:

- Present findings to lower elementary students, ask them to be more conscious about food waste.
- Write a letter to parents, asking them to allow children to pack their own lunches.
- Conduct a catered lunch survey to determine which foods most and least liked, present findings to the school, and write a letter to the lunch provider with menu suggestions.

Personally, I think they have wonderful ideas and I believe they will make a difference!

From my many years' experience working with children, I have discovered how to help children enjoy healthy food and recognize the gift it is. Here are few simple tips:

- Have a garden at home. Talk about how foods come to our tables.
- Involve children in creating grocery lists and shopping (being mindful of how media influences attitudes about food)
- Involve children in preparing meals, including packing their own lunch kits.
- Honor mealtimes. Turn off electronics. Talk to each other. Set the table, put fresh flowers on the table, treat mealtime like it is a meaningful event.
- Stop worrying if your child is going to eat enough at school. Children will not starve themselves. They will eat when they are hungry, as their body requires. When all the options are healthy from breakfast to dinner, there is not much to worry about.
- Give children small portions or allow children to serve themselves. Large portions of food are overwhelming. Better to have your child ask for seconds than to waste or force overeating.
- Talk about the food - **how** it tastes, **where** it comes from, **who** prepared it, rather than trying to convince your child to eat. When we present interesting facts about food before it is served, the child is always more likely to try it.
- Be the example - eat slowly, savor the flavor and enjoy these precious moments with your family.

Thanks for reading and we hope you enjoy your next meal!

Barbara Nelson

Upcoming Events:

- 3/1-3/8** Summer Camp Enrollment
- 3/2** Parent Enrichment, Toddler Community:
9-11 am (childcare provided for enrolled
toddlers – must RSVP)
- 3/5** PAV meeting 8:30-9:30 am
- 3/8** Open House 9-11am
- 3/11 - 3/15** Montessori Holiday: Spring Break
Only 'Full-Day' students attend
- 3/29** Early Release
- 3/28** Elementary "Watch me Work" 5-6 & 6-7pm
- 3/29** Community Meet up:
Exploration Park 4:30-6pm
- 3/30** Community Garden Day 9 am - Noon
- 4/2** PAV meeting 8:30-9:30 am
- 4/5** School Closed/ Parent/Teacher Conferences
- 4/11** Parent Coffee 8:30-9:30 am
- 4/19** School closed: Good Friday
- 4/26** Community Meet up:
Ceramic by Tess 5-7 pm
- 5/1** Teacher Appreciation Day
- 5/7** PAV meeting 8:30-9:30 am
- 5/9** Parent Coffee & Appreciation 8:30-9:30 am
- 5/10** Open House 9-11am
- 5/17** Moving-Up Ceremony 9:30-11:30 am
- 5/24** Early Release
Last Day of School & Community Meet Up:
George Bush Park 5-7pm
- 5/28 - 5/31** Staff In-service:
Only 'Full-Day' Students Attend



Join us for a:

PARENT WORKSHOP

*Learn Effective Tips on How to Turn
"Terrible Twos" into Amazing Twos!*

Where: MHFC
When: Saturday, 3/2, 9-11am
Led by: Juana and Maria

**Childcare will be provided, but space
is limited. Must RSVP if needed!*



UPCOMING OPEN HOUSES

MARCH 8TH

MAY 10TH

9-11 AM

Invite a friend or family member to tour the
school and meet the director. Don't forget
about the referral program!

PAV Update...

We, the Parent Association of Volunteers (PAV) have been busy, organizing events for our community, and we are thrilled with the results!

First, our MEFI Annual Fund has reached \$9,463! The students' "Legacy Tiles" have been installed, please be sure to check out the "Legacy Wall" in the MHFC & Elementary buildings. The Legacy Social was a small token of our thanks, acknowledging generous supporters from our community – your gifts of time, resources and money make a difference in our school and community!

Second, another primary goal of the PAV is to 'build community' within our school, and that we did, through our 5th annual Pancake Brunch, the much deserved 'Ladies' Night Out' and monthly community meet-ups! This March, we hope to see you at Exploration Park from 4:30 – 6 pm (park closes early).

Finally, we will be ending our MEFI Annual Fund with a silent auction, featuring collaborative art pieces from our Elementary Community. **Art work will be on display in the MHFC building March 1 - 7. Please stop by to admire (and bid on) our work! Bidding ends March 7th & winners will be announced the morning of Friday, March 8th!**



PAV-Sponsored Events:

- Parent Coffees & Guest Speakers
- Community Meet Ups
- Book Fair
- Legacy Social
- Pancake Brunch
- PAV Meetings
- MEFI Annual Fund
- Teacher Appreciation Day

We sure do appreciate our PAV!



What's happening in our Elementary Specials...

In nature class, our elementary students are keeping busy - preparing the soil for the spring gardens, diligently churning the compost barrel, transplanting plants, planting seed potatoes, as well as identifying (and taste-testing) edible plants growing in their gardens. Many were pleasantly surprised to discover the sweetness of stevia, as well as the refreshing flavor of different mints. The students also prepared their own pickles and tasted an assortment of pickles, prepared in different brines. Seeds were collected from the everyday fruits they eat and will be planted in hopes of producing the fruits for the school garden.

Art is in full swing in our 'handwork studio'! Students are exploring art collages, implied line painting and print-making. Students also spent a great deal of time preparing collaborative art pieces....

"The Great Monarch Migration", "Circles of Us" and "Pieces of Picasso"



***Art work will be on display in the MHFC building March 1 -**

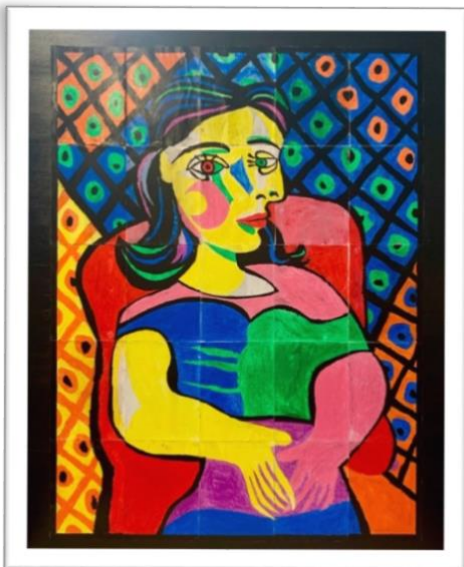
7. Please stop by to admire (and bid on) our work! Bidding ends March 7th & winners

will be announced the morning of Friday, March 8th!

Our '**Eco Teams**' students are getting used to leading their own meetings, recording notes and implementing plans from each team's ideas for improvement. Here's what they are working on...

- The school-yard habitat team is gearing up for our next Community Garden Day, planning which herbs and vegetables to plant before summer.
- The Bio-Diversity group is working to build bird feeders and bird houses, to help bring more wildlife to our school gardens.

- The Waste & Consumption group is working to educate peers about the importance of recycling, how to use the compost bin, and ideas for reducing food waste. They have already added a recycle bin to Mary's kitchen and presented a lesson to our lower elementary students.



Looking Back:

Just to highlight a few events since our last newsletter... Ladies' Night Out, Montessori Journey, Parent's Curriculum Night, Elementary "Going Out" to the George Ranch, Science Fair and dads cooking us pancakes for the February bunch!



Professional Development:

Congratulations to Ms. Lakshmi who recently completed her certification on teaching social values and social skills in an early childhood classroom from Shelton School and Evaluation Center. The course covers concepts like skills for success, responsibility at school, cooperation, need for rules, self-control, good work habits, perseverance, consideration for others and respect.

Also, we want to acknowledge the many who participated in professional development conferences this year:

The Institute of Montessori Education (TIME)

"Back to School" Conference, Oct. 2018:

Ebtisam Agbaria, Maria Aguilar, Francisco Albornoz, Licett Espin, Magali Fisher, Alexandra Gonzalez, Lima Haikal, Elisa Jawani, Alexandra Rohl, Rosario Via, and Juana Sipple.

The Institute of Montessori Education (TIME)

New Year's Conference, Jan. 2019:

Magali Fisher, Alexandra Rohl, and Blanca Smith.

American Montessori Society (AMS)

Annual Conference, March 21-24, Washington, DC.:

HOS, Barbara Nelson and Lead Guides: Maria Aguilar, Sandy Karbarwal, Lakshmi Thirumalai, Aruna Alluri, Magali Fisher & Alexandra Rohl.

Celebrating Our Years Together:

Mary Russell	13 yrs	Cook
Pam Nelson	13 yrs	Founder
Barbara Nelson	13 yrs	HOS
Juana Sipple	12 yrs	Lead
Neelo Surty	12 yrs	Admin
Norma Angulo	8 yrs	Admin
Lima Haikal	7 yrs	Assistant
Maria Aguilar	7 yrs	Lead
Sandy Karbarwal	7 yrs	Lead
Yaneth Poo	7 yrs	Admin
Ebtisam Agbaria	6 yrs	Assistant
Liyuan Jin	6 yrs	Lead
Glenda Arias	5 yrs	Assistant
Rosario Via	5 yrs	Assistant
Aruna Alluri	4 yrs	Lead
Anna Rubin	4 yrs	Assistant
Blanca Smith	4 yrs	Admin
Lakshmi Thirumalai	4 yrs	Lead
Yaniag Fleitas	3 yrs	Assistant
Megan Richard	3 yrs	Assistant
Alexanda Rohl	2 yrs	Lead
Francisco Albornoz	2 yrs	Lead
Margie El-Moussa	2 yrs	Admin
Elisa Jiwani	1 yr	Assistant
Farah Saulat	1 yr	Assistant
Magali Fisher	1 yr	Lead
Rana Shamim	1 yr	Assistant
Rita Basu	1 yr	Assistant

Meet Margie!

Margie Nelson El-Moussa, a Houston native, originally joined MHFC in 2006 working in front office, and evolved into working in the Business Office at MEFI starting in 2016. She has a business degree, master's in finance, early childhood Montessori credentials, and most recently completed Neuhaus BLS program to become a **Dyslexia Practitioner**. Margie El-Moussa believes whole heartedly in Montessori education through adolescence and feels passionate about Montessori education as an intervention for children with Dyslexia and Dyscalculia. Margie is a grateful mother to three beautiful children, and proud wife to her husband of twenty years.



Nature Program coming to Elementary!

Nature's Classroom Institute (NCI) is the nation's premier environmental education program. With multi-disciplined, degreed educators, lessons are integrated in classrooms to create unique and individualized experiences for each and every student. [Click here](https://discovernci.org/environmental/a-day-in-the-life) to view detailed overview of program.

Other exciting NCI resources...

- A typical day in the life of a student at NCI:

<https://discovernci.org/environmental/a-day-in-the-life>

- Curriculum Concepts Overview:

<https://discovernci.org/documents/prepare/NCI%20-%20Curriculum%20Concept%20Overview.pdf>

- Information on our New Ulm Site:

<https://discovernci.org/environmental/new-ulm-texas>

Summer Camp registration going on now...

Summer is always an exciting time of year for us. In between pajama days, crazy hair days and splash days, the children learn new cultural dances, recipes, crafts and more!

[CLICK HERE FOR REGISTRATION FORM »](#)



Parent Resources:

- . Continuing Montessori in the home: <https://amshq.org/Families/Montessori-and-Your-Child/Montessori-at-Home>
- . The Importance of "Montessori Kindergarten": <http://sammamishmontessori.com/montessori-kindergarten/>
- . Independence and the Montessori Philosophy: <https://montessoriguide.org/help-me-to-help-myself>
- . 5 Differences that Enable Montessori Elementary Students Thrive: <https://www.leportschools.com/blog/five-differences-that-enable-montessori-elementary-students-to-thrive/>
- . Montessori as an Intervention for Children with Dyslexia: <https://www.public-montessori.org/resources/montessori-in-the-public-sector/montessori-as-an-intervention-for-children-with-dyslexia/>



New to Sugar Land! Fort Bend Children's Discovery Center

FREE Admission all year long!

Visit museum, explore science, host parties, and more.

Website: <https://www.childrensdiscoveryfb.org/>

Dyslexia, Dysgraphia & Dyscalculia Programs

MHFC Schools is proud to announce that we now offer Dyslexia, Dysgraphia and Dyscalculia screenings.

With a Dyslexia Practitioner on staff, and our partnership with Dyscalculia Services, we have the tools to both tutor and guide children through hands-on exercises to improve their reading, writing and mathematical abilities.



To inquire about programs, email margie@mhfcschool.com