



2007 - 2008

**MONTESSORI SCHOOLS**

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# P A R E N T N E W S L E T T E R



[www.mehermontessori.org](http://www.mehermontessori.org)

may 08



# NEWS

**S**ummer School forms have been sent home. All forms are due back now. We're having some fun and educational field trips. Summer School dates are June 16–July 25.



## Camp Surf

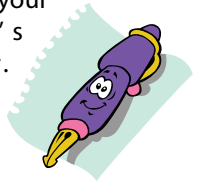
The week of April 28th to May 2nd, Mr. Harrod's class and the graduates from Mr. George's class went to Camp Surf. It is located in San Diego on the beach. The children learned about plant and animal life in the ocean. Some of the activities the children got to experience were visiting a salt water marsh, studying tide pools and visiting an estuary. Check Meher website for photos.



## Parent Conferences

Our second set of Parent Conferences took place the weeks of May 8 — 16. Progress reports were given out at the conferences. You certainly do not have to wait though for a formal parent conference to talk to your child's teacher.

Teachers always have time for informal conferences. Just ask.



## Annual Open House

Come one, Come all!!! To our annual Open House on Thursday, May 29th, from 6:00 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. All children, parents, grandparents and other friends are invited. The Open House is a special time for your child to show you his or her work. It is always a festive occasion with everyone enjoying themselves immensely. There will be a flyer going home soon with more information.

## School Shirt Day

Don't forget! **Friday, May 30th**, is Meher's School Shirt Day! Let's have 100% participation so every class can have a party.

## Holiday

Don't forget! **Monday, May 26th**, is Memorial Day.



## Mrs. Thomas' Class

The children were happy to get back to class after the Spring break and so were the teachers. We were all rested and ready to get back to the routine. Sonny Sluiter went on a trip with his family to Ohio to visit with his grandparents and also to Georgia and seemed to have enjoyed his vacation very much. Ajay Manneth took an out of the Country trip for one month with his parents to India. He visited his grandparents in Hydrabad and also made a trip to Bombay (Mumbai). He seemed to have had such an enjoyable time there visiting with relatives yet was very happy and eager to get back. On arrival he was so tired and jet lagged but insisted that he come to school that morning, so the parents brought him to school that morning. He indeed was so happy and smiling all the time that he is back in the classroom with his friends. The children were equally happy to see him after a long absence.

The Earth Day was on the 22nd of April and Mrs. Ruvalcaba did a special project with our children on that day. The children helped to fill

a planter with soil and then planted some exotic cactus roses. The planter is put on the window sill where it can get a lot of sun. Thank you Mrs. Ruvalcaba for the plants and for giving our children the wonderful experience of planting.

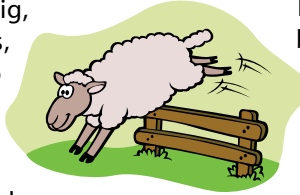
Most of our graduate students have completed tracing, coloring and writing the names of all the 50 states of the United States on individual papers. Congratulations! It's quite an accomplishment for our 5 year olds. Before Christmas all the graduate students colored the map of United States and wrote down the name of all the states. Later it was laminated and sent home.

They have also taken to painting with water color now. The budding artists so far have painted duckling, cardinal (bird) and various fruits that are ready to be arranged in a basket already punched out and also cutout by them. We have varieties of activities in our classroom to meet with the interest and enthusiasm of the children.

We have set up the "Farm" again, now, that the older children are reading very well and are enjoying matching words pertaining to the farm and matching with the



animals and farm equipment. They are also learning words like ewe (mama sheep) hog a large pig, sow mama pig, ducklings, piglets, kids, colts, and so on. The younger children adore looking at the farm and recognizing some of the animals.



Our classroom is a miniature world to explore. We have started growing carrot leaves from the cut out top stub of a carrot and an avocado seed just beginning to root and by the way our mama and papa finches (the birds) have just become parents to another set of babies. Our classroom indeed is a happy place, a true "Casa de Bambini" (House of Children).



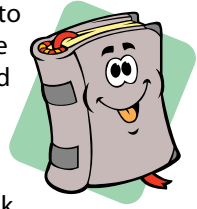
The parent conferences for my class parents are again scheduled for 2 Fridays. The 1st one was held on the 16th of May. Every parent who signed up kept the appointment. I really enjoyed meeting with them and getting to know them and discuss the progress of their child. The meetings were very fruitful. Another parent conferences is scheduled for Friday, May 30th. I would like to thank Harsh and Yash's mom Mr. Bhagat for subbing for me the day I was writing the class report sheets and also Tiffany's mom for taking my place during parent conferences. These mothers

are our room parents and are always willing to help out in many ways. Thank you again.

Happy Birthday to our April babies Jessica Basallo, Ricardo Centeno, Jennifer Luy, and David Ramirez.

Last month we won 100% again on School Shirt Day an ice cream party is pending.

The Bookfair was a big success. Our class contributed very generously towards the bookfair. Individual "Thank you" notes will be sent to the parents in due course who contributed towards this worthy cause. Mrs. Suh, Ms. Muñoz, Ms. Avila and I would like to thank Jordan Calderon and her mom for the generous gift of \$100 towards books for our class. We were truly touched by their generosity and Nnamdi's parents for cash donation for the books and also to all our dear parents for their kind contribution towards the books for our class. We are really fortunate to have such caring and enthusiastic and generous parents. The books will be soon displayed in our library bookshelves, for our children to enjoy them.



With Much Love,  
Mrs. Thomas  
Mrs. Suh  
Ms. Muñoz  
Ms. Avila



## Mrs. Weerakkody's Class

Dear Parents,

The month of May is upon us. Time to let the wonderful families get to enjoy all the great things that went on in our classroom from the beginning of April. We started the month of April with a very special sushi making project. This was quite an enjoyable project not only for the students but also for the teachers. Annabelle Chan's mom and dad set a date to make sushi from scratch. The children in the class got to grate cucumbers and cut avocados.



Annabelle's parents brought all the needed ingredients from the cooked rice to the mats to roll the sushi in. All the older children got a turn to make and roll sushi. We made California rolls with and without crab meat. We were surprised that most of the students tasted it and liked it. Thank you to Mr. and Mrs. Chan.

In April we had a wonderful opportunity to host a nice young teacher from the AMI training center in La Jolla, California. Her name is Michelle Hseung. She was with us for two weeks as a teacher in training. The children felt very comfortable and enjoyed working with her. The children worked hard with Ms. Michelle's help to make and decorate

cup cakes for Ms. Michelle as a nice send off. We wish her all the best in her teaching career.

Everyone had a great Spring break. Many families went to many exciting places. Some visited museums and some went to Disneyland. It all sounded very exciting. I was glad to get a lot of rest.

The graduates are working on very many advanced projects. They are working on addition and subtraction with decimal cards and the full set of decimal materials. They are progressing in writing their odd and even numbers in to the hundreds.

In Language, we are working on animals and home, animals and sounds and animals and their young.

In Geography, the graduates have started working on the map of the U.S.A. We are working on the land forms and bodies of water and their differences.

We started a spring planting project. We had planted lima beans and they are already spouting. In Botany, we learned the parts of a plant and flower. Now the children can see how the seed turns into a plant. We are in the process of planting a vegetable garden.

With the help of charts and posters we are learning about our 5 senses and various food groups.

We celebrated



Cinco de Mayo in a very grand scale. Thank you to all the families that sent us the variety of tasty food, drinks, desserts, decorations and music. Thank you to the Treto family for the beautiful piñata and the goodies inside.

Thank you to the parents that came and helped us set up, serve and clean up. Nathaniel Chu's mom and Grandma (Yesenia Chu and Marina Monroy), Isaac Arroyo's mom (Claudia Mendez), Jasmyn Lew's mom (Willetta Bahe), and thanks to Naolin Crosthwaite-Gonzalez's parents for the book and music.

In our cooking class this month, we made cupcakes, pineapple pie, quesadillas, peanut butter and jelly sandwiches. The students are enjoying the specialties.

We are getting ready for parent conferences. I am anxiously awaiting to meet all my parents on the 15th of May. Hope all our mom's and grandma's had a wonderful Mother's Day.

We also have to plan our graduation. I have 8 graduates that are moving on this year. I am very proud and glad and also sad to lose them at the same time.

We continue to learn different things with Mrs. Ruvalcaba. Thank

you for all the Cinco de Mayo experience given to the students and the staff. All the care you take to teach the music, the dance and the history. Thank you again for the bottom of my heart.

I need to thank Zoe's mom (Mrs. Kim) for reading to the class and sharing a beautiful book, *The Music Man*. The class really enjoyed the book.

We will have Open House for our families on May 29th at 6:00 p.m. I am looking forward to meeting all the families. Our children are excited to show off their work to their families. Our public Open House is May

31st. Send all interested friends and families to attend.

Our bookfair is the week of May 12th — 15th. Please support the school by purchasing books for your children and also for the class library.

Don't forget School Shirt Day is Friday, May 30th.

Have a great Memorial Day holiday. See you at Open House. Thank you for all your support in our class and our classroom activities.

I need to thank Ms. Martinez, Ms. Mills and Ms. Avila for the help given to me in the classroom.

Thank You.

Mrs. Weerakkody  
Ms. Martinez  
Ms. Mills  
Ms. Avila  
Ms. Ruvalcaba



MOTHER'S DAY  
CONTINENTAL BREAKFAST  
IN MR. PAGE AND MS. PEÑA'S CLASS



## Mr. Page & Ms. Peña's Class

Our Cinco de Mayo party was a huge success. We had a couple of tables full of food. For snack and appetizers we had Mexican chocolate, guacamole, salsa and chips. For main dishes we had tamales, cheese enchiladas and chicken taquitos. For side dishes we had Spanish rice and refried beans. Then for dessert we had rice pudding, flan and watermelon. Beverages included horchata and juice. Mexican music was also provided.

After all the recesses were over, we went out onto the playground to take whacks at a beautiful burro piñata that Ms. Peña brought. The children were squealing with delight as each took 4 or 5 swings at the piñata with a stick. Finally the piñata broke after first losing its head... and we picked up all the treats, which went home with the children later in the day.

Thanks go to the many parents who helped the children by bringing food, drinks and other items. And special thanks go the parents who were able to attend our party and help out with the preparation and clean up: Carol Cadena (Emma's mom), Luz-Elena's family (mom, dad and grandmother), Erika Manzares (Isaac's mom), Maribel Barnuevo (Andrew's mom), (Emiliano's mom) and Mr. Page's wife.

We are enjoying our final set of Parent Conferences. We take pleasure in discussing each child's progress and giving parents a sense of what happens in the classroom. Working together with each child's strengths and weaknesses, the parent-teacher combination is always more successful.

School Shirt Day – We had 100% participation again and are the only class to have had perfect participation every month this year. Thanks go to our parents for this! We celebrated our success with an ice cream party.

Our classroom is bristling with excited learners. All of the children love the classroom and are very focused on learning more and more. It is such a pleasure for us as teachers to see the payoff from the children's earlier work in the year – as one step leads to another and another. Often the parents are not aware of the goal of all the activities the children have in the classroom – but they sure are aware that all of a sudden their child is reading!

So much of our work in the classroom has results that are hidden until the full flowering of the children's visible skills. No one much notices the sewing of seeds, the hoeing, raking, mulching and pulling of weeds in a garden – but everyone notices the beautiful flowers that bloom later. The flowers in that beautiful garden didn't get there magically – it was



the patient gardener's work that led to them. It's the same in our work with young children.

Mother's Day Breakfast – We had the most wonderful party for all our mothers. Our classroom was full of love as the children entered with their moms. Each mother got two gorgeous long-stemmed roses handed to her by her child. Catherine's mom brought in a large assortment of roses, which added to the ones we already had, so that each mom was able to get two roses! In addition, the children gave their mom a special handmade purse. They worked with Mrs. Rivera making the purse as a Mother's Day project. Each mother's face was lit with joy as their child handed them their roses and purse. We have photos of the event linked from our website under "recent updates."

We have an exercise in the classroom called the "Land and Water Forms." One of the children asked the other day if he could work with the "Water Uniforms"!

### **Old King Cole**

*Old King Cole was a merry old soul,  
And a merry old soul was he;  
He called for his pipe,  
And he called for his bowl,  
And he called for his fiddlers three.*

*(Each new verse the children say something new that Old King Cole called for and then they act it out. Ask them; they'll show you!)*

*Ms. Peña, Mr. Page and Mrs. Rivera*

## **Bookfair Results!**

**HOT! HOT! HOT!**

Boy oh boy, Mrs. Yoshida and I never thought we would meet and exceed our goal of \$125 in the "One for Books" donation. We achieved 203% of our goal with the grand total of \$254! The grand prize winner of the "Build a Book" is Mrs. Thomas' class with an awesome donation total of \$114. Second place Mr. Page and Ms. Peña's class with \$46, Mrs. Weerakkody's class with \$44, Mr. George's class with \$38 and Mr. Harrod's class with \$13. The recipients are three non-profit organizations dedicated to helping kids and families in need that will receive 254 books. These organizations include Kids in Distressed Situations, National Center for Family Literacy, and Toys for Tots.

Your simple act of kindness brings more knowledge, more adventure, more humor, more mystery, and more imagination in the lives of young people. Thank you so much to all who participated and kept the spirit of giving each day.

Mrs. Chavez  
Mrs. Yoshida



Total book fair sales. Total Sales were \$3213.06 in books with a 30% increase over last year.

Our librarian Rosa Piñuelas will enjoy using the bookfair profit of \$1484 for the new audio equipment that will be purchased for the library from Scholastic. Great job Meher Montessori Parents!

## Mr. George's Class

May has been a month of review and testing. We have reviewed the four operations (two operations for first graders) in math as well as the step by step approach to addition of fractions. We followed it up with application of the answers. We continued studying plants with a new set of picture cards. In history, we reviewed the study of housing, clothing and transport as well as adding events onto their time line. In Geography we reviewed the European map followed by a map test. In Grammar we have extended the development of the Adverb with a chart depicting how, how often, where and when. A sheet of sentences followed. The child had to circle the adverb and tell us which category it would be placed. Mrs. Thames-Bell has been doing the Stanford Achievement Testing this past week.

Everyone enjoyed Cinco de Mayo. Our meal was delicious as always. Much thanks goes to Mrs. Puente, Mr. and Mrs. Sanchez and Mrs. Yoshida for their help. Thank you also to the parents that contributed to our wonderful feast. We enjoyed the various Mexican dishes, fruits, vegetables and desserts. We need to think up more holidays.

The Parent-Teacher Conferences went well. You were mostly amiable, interesting, and happy to hear about their child's progress in work habits

and production. I hope that I have met the needs of your child. New Report Cards were distributed showing an extension of sub-titles to my subject areas. I will keep revising them until I get it right.

Much thanks goes out to Nicholas' mom, Cathy, for showing the children how to make Mother's Day bracelets from string and trinkets. We appreciate her talents, time, effort and expense in delighting the children and their moms.

Kudos goes out to Julian and Taylor for their puzzle map of famous places of Canada and Asia respectively.

Kudos goes out to Renae for reaching 51 pages on her grammarbook. Taylor reached 74 pages in Geography which encompassed 20 pages of Economics, 32 pages of Q and A of the 50 states, 10 pages of the study of the Earth's Movement and the rest on the Rainforest.

Kudos goes to Nicholas for completing over 90 pages in his geometry compo book. He completed work on lines, angles, altitude, and parts of polygons and circles.

Kudos goes to Sofia Huh for completing 95 pages in her grammar booklet mostly using the grammar boxes.

Congratulations also goes out to Samantha and Timmy for completing 54 and 51 pages of grammar respectively.

Sincerely,

Mr. George and Mrs. Thames-Bell



## Mr. Harrod's Class

We had a great Cinco de Mayo meal thanks to Tatian Avila and her organizational skills. She phoned our parents and some of the assistants for help. The children really had a good time.

— The jetty, beads, the bug bush, the marsh, journals, the estuary, Motel 6, the Ritz Carlton, cabin clean up, skits, food, the Flying Jelly Slime, naturalists, and the Earth Day Festival —

### WHAT DOES IT ALL MEAN?

These were some of the things at Camp Surf that made our week long stay at their outdoor education school such a rich and informative experience. At the jetty, the marsh and the estuary the naturalists helped us see, touch and even taste what plants and animals have done to adapt to live in these environments.

The Ritz Carlton was the tent that Mr. Harrod and Mr. Tamura had to sleep in, because there was no room for them in the inn - I mean no room for them in the Motel 6 - I don't really mean Motel 6. The children and parents had spacious, well constructed cabins in which to sleep

and store their things. We called the cabins Motel 6, because we wanted the tent - the Ritz Carlton - to seem luxurious.

The children cleaned their cabin every day and wrote their own journal each day. On the last day the children cleaned their cabins during the last class period. We are the only school that cleans their cabins well enough, so that the naturalists do not have to clean the cabins after we leave.

The children really worked hard the last day to leave their part of the earth at Camp Surf better than when they arrived.

The Naturalists work for Camp Surf. They have gone to college and have received further training at Camp Surf. They are specialists in their field and have experience working with children. The naturalist would give a bead to children who were attentive and successful at the task of the class. The children valued the beads they received. I saw a really special relationship between the children and the Naturalists. Our children are lucky that they go to a Montessori school. I always receive compliments from Naturalists: your children are creative and they know so much.

We respect



**MR. HARROD'S CLASS  
AT CAMP SURF**



life. If a bug was found at Camp Surf, s/he was picked up as gently as possible and carried to the bug bush. The bush was away from the cabin, and a place we hoped the bug would be safe.

The children created their own skits (little plays) and performed them at a campfire. The food at the cafeteria was great. We went to the Earth Day Festival at the pier on the way back from the estuary. The Flying Jelly Slime was a make believe animal thought up by some of our children during a class. The children had to out bid other children for adaptive characteristics to help their animal find food and protect itself.

The children wrote answers in a journal Camp Surf gave them during the eighteen classes the children participated in during the week. The children wrote another journal in their cabin at free time.

The parents and grandparents who stayed with us at camp really helped. They were, Mrs. Chavez, Mr. Ordaz, Mr. and Mrs. Tamura, Mrs. Yoshida, Mr. Ballesteros, Mr. Jimenez, Ms. Piñuelas and Mrs. Magdangal. They seemed to have a very good time, also!

The parents and grandparents who drove us there and back made our great experience possible. They were, Ms. de la Torre, Mrs. Chavez, Mr. Fucci, Mr. and Mrs. Jimenez, Mr. Ordaz, Mr.

and Mrs. Tamura, Ms. Piñuelas and Ms. Cota.

I want to give special thanks to Kookie Chavez. She coordinates the trip with Camp Surf and copies the information for the parents before going to Camp Surf, among other things: she is an invaluable help. Thank you, Kookie.

I would like to say, "Good going," to the children who went to Camp Surf. The children "paid attention" in the classes, followed directions and left only foot prints and good feelings for themselves and for the Camp Surf staff.

We had 100% on school shirt day before leaving for Camp Surf. We had ice cream after lunch last week.

The 6th-graders have produced a lot of good essays.

Jessica, Desiree, Gabriella, Sophie and Dave Harrod



## After School Art Class

Our 2007–2008 Art Exhibition will begin on the evening of the End-of-the-Year Open House on Thursday, May 29th. The children in the After School Art Classes will have their artwork for this school year on display for all to enjoy.

This year we have learned lots of new things about doing art and you will see these concepts expressed in our “budding artists” exhibition.

Gail Shaeffer and Linda Yoshida

## Primary Daycare



Hello Everyone!  
We celebrated Cinco de Mayo in our daycare room by presenting a little program of five Regional Dances of Mexico.

Ms. Peña and some children from Mrs. Thomas' class and Mrs. Weerakkody's class participated in the program. Mrs. Ruvalcaba spoke about the costumes and music of each region. At the end of our presentation all the children were invited to dance with us. Everyone had a good time.

We celebrated Mother's Day by inviting Ms. Manneth (Ajay's mom) to read to the group, *Love You Forever* by Robert Munsch. It is

a beautiful story about a child and his mom.

Thank you Ms. Manneth!

If you are interested in reading to the group, please see Mrs. Ruvalcaba.

Daycare Staff

## Elementary Daycare

Happy Birthday to my Mom! I hope everyone had a wonderful Mother's Day and Cinco de Mayo. This month I would like to welcome a new student to our elementary daycare named Tommy Chen. The school year is almost over and I hope everyone is enjoying the school year before it ends.

Ms. Avila



## The Nuns from Korea

This year we had a big group of 27 nuns, visit our school from the Korean National Women's Religious Educators Organization. They were on a U.S. tour.

Mrs. Muñoz





# ALTADENA NEWS

## MAY EVENTS

**CINCO DE MAYO** — We had a fun time celebrating “Cinco de Mayo” on Monday, May 5th. We danced “The La Raspa” and the “Macarena”. The children had chips and salsa for their snack and a piñata on the playground.



Estrada and Mr. McGruff came to School April 24th. They talked to the children about stranger dangers and Mr. McGruff had a lot of pictures taken with the children. We all had a good time!



**MOTHER’S DAY BREAKFAST**— All our Mothers were invited to share a breakfast with their children on Friday, May 9th. The children served their moms and gave them a special present that they made themselves. This was a very precious time for both parents and children. Hope all our mothers enjoyed the special breakfast.



**FIRE DEPARTMENT** — The big red fire engine came to School April 29th. The fireman showed the children different equipment on the fire truck and they even turned on the fire hose on the playground. The children learned a lot about calling 911 in an emergency and never to hide in a house if the house is on fire. The children all wanted to be fireman!



**POLICE DEPARTMENT** — Deputy

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**OUR GARDEN** — We are so happy with the May surprises that Mrs. Page puts in our garden. Last week she came by and put the cutest little boy reading a book to go along with our jumping rope little girl. The children have named the little girl "Mrs. Page". I wonder what they are going to call the little boy?



**BIRTHDAYS** — Sydney Holloway – May 19th, Miss Avila - May 10th.



**SUMMER SCHOOL DEPOSIT DUE MAY 23rd** — We have lots of fun things planned for our summer program and remember we have water play on Fridays. Don't be left out!!!!!!!

**MRS. HYDE'S CLASS** — The time is quickly approaching for another school year to end. The children have done beautifully and we are all so proud of their accomplishments. Graduation will be a sad / happy day when some of our children will be leaving to go to other schools. I know

any child that leaves this Montessori School will be well rounded and will excel at any challenge that is given to him/her. Graduation will be Thursday, June 13th at 10:00 a.m. The ceremony will be upstairs in the gym. All children will participate in our program. We will have a pot-luck lunch following the ceremony. I hope you can all attend! There will be no school June 13th but summer school will start June 16th.



"My vision of the future is no longer of people taking exams and proceeding on that certificate from the secondary school to the University, but of individuals passing from one stage of independence to a higher, by means of their own activity, through their own effort of will, which constitutes the inner evolution of the individual."

—Dr. Maria Montessori

## A Note from a Parent about Camp Surf

Have you ever wondered about high tide and low tide? Its relationship to the moon? The color of ocean water and its relationship to the sky? Or, have you wondered about sea life on a jetty? How about surviving out on sea or land? What items would be completely essential to your survival? Well, if your child went to Camp Surf they can probably answer all these questions. Ask them about kelp, how fast does it grow? What are the parts of kelp? Ask them what Brackish water is, they can tell you.

Ask them about climbing a jetty, doing archery and scaling a wall. Oh, I didn't mention these are lessons also, the boys and girls are always in a learning environment. Learning doesn't need to be in a classroom - In an outdoor environment such as Pathfinder and Camp Surf the children are immersed in outdoor learning from the moment they open their eyes to the moment they lay their heads on their pillows at night. Very few things can give the child a better opportunity to breathe fresh air, be one with the earth, and learn while they use a hands-on approach in the great outdoors.

Even though this is my last time on these field trips, I will have a lifetime of cherished memories with all these kids. I encouraged all who have the opportunity to attend these outdoor education camps to do so. They are an embellishment to their Montessori education and you can experience the joy these children experience while they are there. Every trip to Pathfinder Ranch & Camp Surf, has allowed me to enjoy all the children of Mr. Harrod's class.

Mr. Harrod, thank you for all you do with your kids. Your love of nature, the environment and our earth leaves an everlasting impression in our children's minds and hearts. You make the difference.

Please log on to Meher Montessori School website to view the pictures from Camp Surf.

Mrs. Chavez