

PARENT NEWSLETTER



HAPPY NEW YEAR!

www.mehermontessori.org

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Every year the teachers plan some special activity in their classrooms to better acquaint the children with Dr. Maria Montessori. Dr. Montessori is the person who started the Montessori Method of education early last century in Italy. The children learn about Maria Montessori's life through photos, illustrations, stories and other memorabilia. Did you know that Maria Montessori was Italy's first female physician? Did you also know that Italy has produced stamps and money with Dr. Montessori's picture?

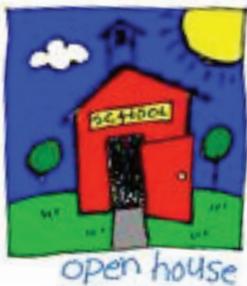
Holidays

There will be no school on Monday, February 13th, and Monday, February 20th, which are Lincoln's Birthday and Presidents' Day.



Public Open House

On Saturday, February 4th, 2017 from 10:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m. we will have our semi-annual Public Open House. Get a \$100 tuition credit if you recommend someone to attend who then registers and enrolls.



Dear Parents,

It is never too early to begin thinking about next school year. I invite parents of graduating primary students to schedule an observation in both our elementary classes. Graduate parents of our 6-9 class may schedule an observation of our 9-12 class and of our Middle School as well, and the parents of our 9-12 class graduates may schedule an observation at our Middle School. We are very proud of our Montessori classrooms and believe that observations really help parents understand the next level of development and how a Montessori classroom guides and responds to the children's needs. Please contact me or Mrs. Chavez to schedule an observation appointment.

Mrs. Muñoz

Mrs. Rivera's Class

To begin with I'd like to wish everyone a very "Happy New Year!" May we all have the best blessings that 2017 can give. This year is the year of the "Rooster." Roosters are great animals with reputed characteristics that include independence, capability, warm-heartedness, self-respect and quick mindedness! In addition they are considered honest, bright, communicative and ambitious. When we returned from break the children seemed to have grown taller and most of the boys had their hair cut short and most of the girls' hair grew longer and had bangs! I saw the glow of excitement in the children's eyes as we greeted one another and shook hands in class in the morning. When they started to work, they were positive and excited in the lessons given them. The children couldn't wait to share in our circle time their own



stories and experiences of winter break. In the first week of class they brought new books from museums and pictures from their vacations in various states.

My winter break of two weeks was great and restful! A lot of bonding with family members and loved ones occurred, and my favorite was walking exercises in the park and trails with my friends and family. In class the children polished previous lessons and moved to new lessons and skills in the four areas of their primary Montessori learning. Older ones are reading more and mastering their phonics, puzzle words, spelling, and recognizing the function of words in language. Both older and younger ones are taking turns working in the sensorial and geography areas. The favorite work of the older children is in language and math; such as recognizing and

solving simple money problems, writing a sentence and recognizing the sequence of word functions. The younger ones are moving along at their own pace with writing and recognizing the sequence of numbers from one to fifty. Most of the younger ones as they see the learning progress of the older ones are challenged to follow in their footsteps. Every week these children become more independent, knowledgeable and respectful with one another and with the adults present in our classroom.



yahoo.com. I'd like to say "thank you!" to all our parents who came to watch and applauded the children's performance. Thank you so much for the presents given to us. Special thanks go to Mrs. Suh and Ms. Bayon for their energy in crafting colorful decorations, and projects for our classroom while at the same time fusing discipline, love and care to all the children. Thank you too to Ms. Ramirez, Mrs. Deng and Ms. Kulwicki for being present in our class at the right time for our breaks and giving extra help to both children and adults.

We have three children who were born in January! They are Mario Garcia and Ryan Le, who both turned four years old and Ryan Narito who turned five years old. To each of these boys, Happy Birthday!



We had wonderful caroling for Santa Claus and parents in December. I'd like to ask some parents to send a few pictures of this event to be shared with parents who did not make it to our Christmas party. Please send these to my email address: marie_rivera792000@

in class I read the life story of a famous person whose birthday is celebrated on January 15th and that's the reason why we had no school Monday, January 16th. His name is Martin Luther King, Jr.! He was an American Baptist minister and activist who was a leader in the Civil Rights Movement. He was best known for his role in the advancement of civil rights using nonviolent civil disobedience. His dream was to have equality among all people. The children,

especially the older ones and future graduates in our class, were truly focused as I read his life story. They understood his main goal in life and learned to pronounce new words and learn their meanings; like equality among men, peace and non-violence, love, respect and faith which make a person successful in attaining his goals in life as a leader. After reading his story, the children smiled and were awed with his bravery and accomplishments in life.

A few reminders for this month of January: School Shirt Day is Friday, January 27th and Chinese and Korean Lunar New Year will be celebrated in class this day too! A flyer concerning this celebration is on the sign-out book. I would like to invite the Chinese and Korean parents and children to help us make this occasion a festive and successful one. If you have any ideas on how to celebrate it please feel free to inform either, Mrs. Rivera, Ms. Bayon and Mrs. Suh anytime. Thank you so much!

May we all have a safe, colorful and joyful celebration of the Chinese and Korean New Year!

Mrs. Rivera, Mrs. Suh, Ms. Bayon, Ms. Kulwicki and Ms. Ramirez



Mrs. Roque's Class

We all came back refreshed after the holiday break at the start of this New Year. Thank you parents for all the wonderful gifts and especially for your support in making the Holiday special by bringing treats, volunteering in the classroom preparation and clean-up; and most of all, for taking time out of your busy schedules to be with your child during the holiday party. They loved singing those Christmas carols and were delighted with Santa's visit and to be able to talk to him.

In the classroom

The children are happy being back to their classroom routines, revisiting jobs and looking forward to new lessons being presented to them. In the first few days we reviewed Grace and Courtesy lessons like walking in the classroom, speaking softly, waiting for one's turn, and respecting our friends by listening while they are talking. This is in keeping with our goal of having



a peaceful work environment. We are continuing our daily routine of choosing a "person of the day" to do our calendar and lead the class in singing the day songs (Today is ...(day of the week/weather). We go down the list of names so everyone gets a chance to be one.

Our birthday celebrants for the month of January are:

Pari (January 10th) turned 4 and Jake (January 26th) turned 3.

We read a book about the life of Martin Luther King Jr. to celebrate his birthday this month and talked about his dream of all people being treated equally. The children were quite attentive and had an understanding of why we were having a holiday in his honor.



This month we will be talking about the season of winter: how the weather changes; clothes to wear; how some animals hibernate. Along with this we will also talk about how we measure time on the clock and find ways of recording past events. We will be recording progression by making a Time Line, so start gathering those pictures

(one for each year of your child's life). A reminder note will be sent home as to when we will need them. We also encourage parents to bring these photographs when your child is celebrating their birthday in school so he/she can make their own time line and see a progression and change in the way they look.

This month, we will talk and read books about the Chinese New Year (January 28th). Let us know if you want to volunteer in the classroom by: reading a story, teaching a Chinese song/ dance or showing the children a Chinese paper craft.

The math area in a Montessori classroom is filled with beautiful and fascinating hands-on materials that bring mathematical concepts to life. The math program is integrated into the curriculum, drawing on skills the child has already mastered in Practical Life and Sensorial.

This is the reason why we give numerous lessons to our younger children in the areas of Practical Life and Sensorial. For example, tasks like polishing wood involve several steps (which develop the logical mind) and requires some hand coordination skills (strengthening the hand muscles for writing later on). Arranging the Pink Tower cubes

develops the visual discrimination and refines movement and eye-hand coordination.

Several of our older children in class have been doing collective exercises using the Golden Bead Material, doing operations (e.g. addition, subtraction). The Montessori math materials are amazing in the way that the children get a visual and concrete representation of larger quantities (e.g. golden cube for the thousand, and a square for the hundred). Dr. Maria Montessori called these materials "materialized abstractions". Rather than a collection of "facts" to be memorized, they get a hands-on experience, for example, of putting smaller quantities together to come up with a larger quantity in the end (addition). It is a joy to see some of them doing this exercise on their own (usually in a small group of 3 children) without any prodding from an adult.

Calendar Reminder:

Feb. 4th – Public Open House. Please share your experiences as a Montessori Parent and invite others.

Until next month,
Mrs. Roque,
Ms. Mills and Ms. Kulwicki





**UPPER AND LOWER
ELEMENTARY WRITING
HOLIDAY CARDS TO SEND TO
CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL.**



Ms. Tenold's Class

Class news

Happy New Year! We have no January birthdays, but we had a special birthday to celebrate nonetheless. For the second year in a row, our class observed the birthday of Martin Luther King, Jr. by having treats (veggies from the garden + cupcakes) and honored his legacy by learning about him and memorizing parts of his famous "I Have a Dream" speech. Thanks to the Lucero family for baking the cupcakes and decorating them as microphones again!

Curriculum news

Students like to learn the systems of measurement and use the tools to practice measuring length, volume, weight, etc. An example of a work choice for this would be to choose one fact to learn, such as 1 foot = 12 inches, then predict what items are that length and check with a ruler.

We continue to study the history of the world, which the students all seem very interested in. The lessons start with stories of the past, giving a glimpse of what life was like around 10,000 B.C. and how humans were meeting their fundamental needs of food, shelter, defense, and clothing. The lesson turns into a discussion amongst the students themselves. One child volunteers

something they are pondering from the story and others chime in with responses and more questions.

Learning about the elements and the periodic table is also another interesting topic for our third years. We are mainly focusing on hydrogen and helium right now - the properties and uses of them - and students make models of atoms.

Students are introduced to fractions in their first year in Montessori, and then decimals separately. It is great to watch them make connections between these and say things like, "So decimals are just like fractions!" That realization is made partly by the children themselves through manipulation of the materials and talking with their classmates. For example, one child was setting out tenths with the decimals and one wondered aloud how many it would take to make one whole, and I reminded them that ten tenths in fractions also makes one whole. This led to talking about how five tenths in decimals is like one half in fractions, and we looked at both the fraction and decimal work simultaneously.

Calendar news

This month we also have Chinese New Year on January 28 to celebrate! We learned about this holiday throughout the month and celebrated it the Friday before. Our class got 100% School Shirt Day in December! School Shirt Day this month is on Friday, January 27th.

Ms. Strand's Class

Happy New Year, Meher families! We had a great holiday party in our room the last day before the break, including some fun activities such as karaoke, games, enjoying treats, and a gift exchange. We even got a surprise visit from Santa, and the children sang some carols to him too. Thank you parents for bringing in snacks for our party.

This year, we began a new tradition and the children from Upper and Lower Elementary classes got together to write holiday cards to children staying at a local hospital to bring them some cheer. The bundle of handwritten notes and pictures was mailed off for the children at the hospital to enjoy before the break. It was so sweet to see both classrooms together writing their cards.

The class has really been enjoying the last couple of read-aloud books. "Wonder" and "Auggie & Me," by R.J. Palacio. These stories are based upon a true story, and the students have really grown attached to the characters. They created artistic responses to the

themes of the book - self-identity and acceptance, friendship, family, courage and kindness.

For the month of January, Jordan is the President and Nirali is the Vice President. They helped plan the group projects for the month and will also be organizing a day to promote community service and giving back through helping others. We look forward to their plans.

Happy 2017 everyone!!



Mr. Mindes' Class

Greetings in the New Year! It's hard to believe that it has only been a week since we've returned from winter break - things getting so quickly back to where we left them on December 23. I suppose the one difference between now and pre-break is how refreshed everyone – teachers and students alike – appears.

The students jumped right into their programming class on day one of their return, reviewing ideas previously taught and covering a few new ones like initialization and parameters. I noticed, while going over some math with the students, that their programming lessons have run into their study of mathematics. While helping the 8th graders with their private school entrance exams, one of the questions in their student study guides required that they know the logical operators “and” and “or” - two notions used in computer programming and math. Thinking the students didn't know these operators, I was set to review them, but, alas, they had already covered it in their programming class!

The historian's use of sourcing is another thing we looked at our first week back and will continue to do so throughout the year. Sourcing texts or images is something an historian does to determine its validity by asking questions like: “Who wrote this?” What is the

author's perspective?” “Why was it written?” Serendipitously, or not, the widespread use of fake news stories, so much talked about in the media since (and during) the election, makes sourcing a very important skill for citizens to have. We want our students to get in the habit of critically questioning sources, whether they are pouring over a history text, reading an article online, reading an article in the newspaper, viewing an ad, or wherever they read words and look at images.

Most of our classes – language, science, art, and music - rumbled back to life this week. In language arts we have begun to dissect texts, focusing on their organization and structure, helping students to better understand what they read and to use the texts as models for their own writing. In music, the student once again took out their instruments, plucking strings, tapping keys, and blowing through tubes with what appears to be greater confidence and acumen. In science, the students began their foray into physics, while in art they continue to investigate properties of light in relation to form and techniques of perspective drawing.

As you can see, things got going pretty quickly – welcome back!





ALTADENA NEWS

JANUARY EVENTS



HAPPY NEW YEAR!

Open House – On Saturday, February 4th, from 10:00-2:00, we will have our first Public Open House of the school year. Receive a \$100 credit if you recommend someone to attend that registers and enrolls his or her child.

Last Month – The last week of school before the winter break turned out to be full of excitement. We celebrated the first day of winter with a special cooking activity of sugar cookies to be enjoyed in the

afternoon with hot chocolate AND a movie! As I discovered that the School's TV was somehow damaged between the end of Summer Camp and December 21st, this could have proven to be a disaster. Fortunately, the Church manager was kind enough to let us borrow their huge TV. The children were so excited to see such a big TV set up for them in the nap room. It all ended up working out beautifully.

As many of the parents already know, our walking field trip to the fire station did not work out. For one, our positive vibes for dry

weather just weren't strong enough to stop the rain. But, perhaps more importantly than that, the firefighters were not even going to be at the Fire Station during the time we were scheduled to be there. They had been called away to training. While the children were disappointed, they seemed to understand that it was very important that the firefighters take their more firsthand knowledge and training to continue to develop their depth about the Kwanza traditions safety skills when it comes to entering burning buildings. Plus, we were lucky enough to have the firefighters come to the school, just before the end of class, to pick up all the toys we collected for their Spark of Love Toy Drive. By then the rain had finally stopped, so the children got to come out and see the fire engine firsthand.

In the December Newsletter, I



TOY DRIVE 2016



mentioned how the class had been learning a little about the three most well-known winter celebrations: Christmas, Hanukah and Kwanza. The class got a special treat the Thursday before the break started. Daryn's mom, Shauna Bigby read a book about Kwanza to the class. As the Bigby family celebrates Kwanza themselves, she was able to provide more firsthand knowledge and depth about the Kwanza traditions than I ever could. Thank you again Mrs. Bigby!

And that brings us to our Holiday Program, which was held on Friday, December 23rd. I had no idea it was going to be such a full house! Our little school had OVER 80 people, including staff and children, spilling out of the rooms and into the halls. I would like to thank everyone for being such good sports about

the cramped quarters. Many of the parents have thanked me for the great performance and let me know how impressed they were with well-behaved and together the children were. The children practiced for about a month to be that ready. They worked hard to learn the songs because they wanted to show off for their families. While I would like to take all the credit for a job well done, it really was such a special performance because of the children themselves.

Also, many parents complemented me on what a great Santa we had this year. My favorite time was when one of our third year students asked me beforehand which daddy was going to be Santa this year. I told her that if she could not figure it out when she saw him, I would tell her afterward. Well, she was stumped, and when I whispered to her that it was Aron's dad, Jay Budzik, she was very surprised! Even knowing that it was going to be a Meher daddy, Mr. Budzik portrayed Santa so well; she had no clue who

was hiding under the red suit!! Thank you again Mr. Budzik for taking on the role of Jolly St. Nick for our Program.



**SHAUNA BIGBY
READING ABOUT KWANZA**

This Month
- While all the children were eager to share their winter break adventures with the staff, they seemed just as eager to get their hands back on the classroom materials.

It has been a much smoother return to school than I could have hoped for. This was especially true considering the first week back was mostly filled with rainy, indoor days. Rainy days tend to lead to very high-energy children. To combat this, we have special rainy day parades at the end of rainy school days. As this has been such a rare occurrence in Southern California, it was only our third year students who vaguely remembered experiencing this in the past. For rainy day parades I give all the children instruments, turn the music on VERY loud and pick a leader to lead our parade all along the inside of the school. As this is out of the



**FIRST DAY OF
WINTER SUGAR
COOKIE, HOT
CHOCOLATE &
SPECIAL MOVIE**

ordinary, the children love it. Walking behind the stairs in the entryway is a highpoint of the parade, as this area is typically off limits to the children. And as an added bonus, they get to bang out some of that pent up, indoor-all day, energy.

This month's School Shirt Day will be on Friday, January 27th. December was another 100% participation month, so the class will have a cooking activity sometime this month to celebrate that.

Coming Up Next Month – February's newsletter will include Black History Month, the Lunar New Year and Valentine's Day. FYI: Children are welcome to bring Valentines for the class, but please remember that your child is **NOT ALLOWED TO PASS OUT FOOD OR CANDY**. We have too many food allergies this year.

One last thing before I close: I mentioned earlier that our TV was damaged. This is not a big deal right now, as we rarely use the TV during our school year. But, come Summer School, we are going to have some disappointed children if we are not able to have movie Fridays. If you happen to have an old TV that you are willing to donate to the school, that would be appreciated greatly!

Until Next Month,
Mrs. Wildhaber,
Miss McCray & Ms. Avila



A SPECIAL MOVIE

HOLIDAY PROGRAM



MONTEREY PARK POLICE DEPARTMENT
911 SAFETY PRESENTATION

