
Philomath Montessori School

May-June 2010

For the Families and Friends of the Philomath Montessori School



Classroom News

Is anyone out there other than myself shocked that the school year has only one month left to go? It seems that as soon as parent-teacher conference season is past the rest of the year passes in a flash! Pauline and I are presenting lessons with a new urgency as we just can't let this one graduate without learning about fractions or that one get away without improving her penmanship. Leslie has been very busy as well because given the warmer temperatures and pleasant periods of fair weather, everyone wants to work outdoors. The afternoon class has been very vocal about wanting to go for walks. I do, too, but not if we have to wear our foul-weather gear. I prefer to wait and make our foray into the big world when we are assured of staying dry. Leslie and Phyllis are both willing to come along with us. We'll walk to Mary's River Park, where there is a marvelous playground. We went last year and it was a wonderful outing.



Maggie B works to prepare a snack

We had a lockdown drill today. In the event that a dangerous person was present in the area, we lock ourselves in the sunflower room with all the lights off and are silent. We then wait there for further instruction from law enforcement. The children did very well and no one's imagination ran away with them. They were all very nonchalant. In years past, older children brought up all sorts of dreadful eventualities so that we might be prepared for any and all possible dangers. As much as I appreciate thoroughness and disaster preparedness, it was nice not to have to reassure the little ones that these specters of mayhem conjured up by their older friends were unlikely in the extreme.



Knylee matches up the smelling jars

Our study of Australia is cruising along. We have told the children much about the aboriginal way of life. We discuss how their ways were nomadic, seasonal and very social with tribes trading amongst each other. We learned about their indigenous arts and something of their religious beliefs regarding the origins of humans and their animal ancestors. We discussed the coming of Europeans and how that invasion led to today's modern lifestyle and the loss of the old ways, indeed the loss of much of the aboriginal population. We discussed the similarities of the plight of the Aborigines and our own Native Americans as well. The more complex of the aforementioned topics were addressed largely to the older group.

It was great fun to find out that their seasons are the opposite of our own and how the beach lifestyle is so greatly enjoyed in Australia, especially on Christmas Day itself. We learned some funny slang phrases from the land down under. For example, did you know that an Aussie enjoys "fair-dinkum tucker for brekkie" (good food for breakfast) and that a nosy person is known as a "sticky beak"? We have enjoyed singing "Waltzing Mathilda" which is also full of Aussie slang or "Strine" as it is known. We

also sang Kookaburra, but decided to change "counting all the monkeys he can see" to "counting all the emus he can see" as there are, in fact, no monkeys in Australia. We have been working with our Australia biome cards, learning about the animals in the temperate forest, grasslands and tropical forest. They certainly have some distinctive wildlife there, most notably the marsupials. We have also shared with the children the awesomeness of the Great Barrier Reef, its formation and ecological importance and most impressively, its mammoth proportions, being the only living thing visible from space. We also learned about Uluru (Ayer's Rock) and its significance to the aboriginal people as a sacred site. Did you know that the massive sandstone mound one can see is merely the tip of a much larger underground formation? It is really incredible!



Raine shells some nuts

We were rich in artifacts for this unit as we had a box of artifacts from the Burke museum to share. It contained some string made of human hair, which wives would give to their husbands, a noise-making device called a bullroarer which produced an eerie hum when swung over the head in a circle, a boomerang and some stone tools and art. Olivia and Isabella's grandmother also let the girls bring some artifacts in for sharing,

including a didgeridu, which is the oldest known wind instrument. A wonderful interactive artifact came in the form of sheep's wool and carders from Beth Jordan. We got to card wool and spin it into yarn as well, connecting us to Australia's vast sheep and wool industry. As luck would have it, Australian girl power was in the headlines this week. Jessica Watson, a sixteen-year-old girl from Australia, just returned safely from her 7 month solo sail around the globe to a hero's welcome! I brought in the newspaper article which had a large photo of the young mariner sailing into her final port of call.



Leslie talks with Raine, Ben and Ian

We are continuing with our experiments in the physical sciences. We had one demonstration on the three states of matter (solid, liquid and gas) and one on evaporation and condensation. We have hands-on activities pertaining to gravity, magnetism, prisms and buoyancy. Pauline presented the older children with a lesson on the earth's water cycle and the production of wind. Many of the lessons and demonstrations are followed with reading activities for those of us who can read at that level



Anna G. pauses to enjoy a snack

On a beautiful morning in April, Earth Day to be precise, we all trooped outdoors for a tree dedication ceremony. It was brief, but meaningful, like all of our celebrations. The Albin family donated an Asian pear tree and labored mightily to install it, having had to dig out the old stump of its deceased predecessor on a cold and mucky day. Kati Albin was able to join us as we dedicated the tree to our earth and rejoiced in how blessed we all were to have this wonderful planet, the only known planet to be able to sustain all the life forms we cherish. Life forms such as you, the family and friends of Philomath Montessori School! We cherish you and feel blessed to have spent another school year living and learning with and from such gifted and generous people. I and the entire staff wish you all a happy, healthy summer. We say a fond farewell to those families who are moving on and a cheerful "see ya later" to those who will be back here with us in the fall. Thanks for all you have done to support our work this year.



Ben concentrates on his work

Newsline

- An update on our **snake pet** idea: after taking measurements I realized that the only spot we could house the snake was the top of the water bottle shelf. I began to picture one of our 3-year-olds doing handwashing with a 3-foot snake lounging behind him/her and it just didn't seem like a prudent idea after all. So we are still thinking of a proper pet for our classroom. Over the summer, we will follow up on some of the ideas suggested at our last parent meeting.
- **Kim Gratz** is pursuing a fundraiser that we haven't done in a long time and the prototype looks quite impressive - not like any **school cookbook** that I've seen! So I think there's still time to get your recipes in and join in the fun.
- **Janel Lawrence** is also heading up a new PhMS fundraiser - **Notecards** that feature the children's photos. She did these for our 2009 auction fundraiser

and they were so stunning that we thought they would do better as a stand-alone fundraiser. So if you would like your child to participate, there is a signup on our wall. Write in your child's name and the chosen theme(s). We are also looking for venues for our notecards so if you'd be willing to approach one of the businesses on the list or someone else you know, please sign on!

- **No school** on Monday, May 31 - Memorial Day.
- Please join us for our **End-of-Year Potluck** on Saturday, June 5 from 5:00 - 6:30 in our school backyard or if the weather is inclement, at Marys River Park (just past Philomath Library on 10th St.) Hope you can make it!
- If you would like to keep your current **year-round job** for the 2010-11 school year, please let me know.
- The **last day of school** will be Thursday, June 10. There will be **no extended day**.
- We are signed up to do a **Farmers Market booth** again on Saturday, July 31 from 9:00 to 1:00pm. If you are willing to give us a hand, please sign up on the wall.
- Please be sure to save Saturday, August 14 from 9:00 a.m. to noon. It's our big **Parent Work Day** to get the 2010-11 year off to a great start. We'll have lots of projects so we'll need lots of help. Please come!



Anna W. works on her planet poster and Joanna on the addition strip board

Thank Yous

May 2010

During the last couple of months, we feel like we have strained the volunteer muscle in our community to the nth degree. *Thank you* for continually stepping up to our constant stream of requests!

Our classroom is always brimming with lovely art activities thanks to **Leslie** and her cohorts and then there are the much-loved sewing standbys that need constant resupplying. **Sherri Mortensen**, way back in October, prepared burlap for sewing, **Lua Siegel** typed art labels and then mounted, labeled, laminated and trimmed a whole new stack of art cards and she also just signed up to laminate and trim our new continent reptile cards and our new Australian animal cards from three different biomes (*whew!*), **Alissa Moses** prepared advanced sewing cards and created some advanced drawing grids with Australian aboriginal symbols, **Beth Jordan** drew and cut boomerang and koala shapes for art activities, and **Janel**

Lawrence drew and cut crocodile and kangaroo shapes for a drawing activity.

Parents also jumped in in other ways to enhance our curriculum. **Keith Moses** came in to give a pottery class to our full day children and then fired and glazed the pots we made. It was thoroughly enjoyed by all including me - I'm ready to do it again! **John Wilson** went through our rocks and minerals to organize and enhance collection. He'll be adding more rocks that can be sorted into the three categories of igneous, sedimentary, and metamorphic as well as providing us with good, simple definition cards to go with them. It's great to have someone who knows his stuff take care of us. Thank you!!



Dhabih looks up from his division stamp game

A big part of the increased need for help these past two months has been the two extra open houses in April and May and the Corvallis Farmers' Market booth that also happened this month. I can't tell you how sweet it is to have parents who are so enthusiastic about helping out. **Bill Brock** and **Carol Hulstrunk** did a great job with our Farmers' Market booth - coming up with a new and different craft activity, making the arrangements for the booth, getting all the materials and supplies to the booth and then

setting it up that day. **Bill** was there from beginning to end and he had some wonderful volunteers backing him up in the booth that day braving the cold wind and rain: **Gretchen Goode, Janelle Lohr, Janel Lawrence and Shawn Foley, Leslie and Hasina Cohen,** and of course, **Carol Hulstrunk**. **Carol** also led the way as our PR parent getting our open house fliers around town. She was assisted by **Hattie Muir (lots!), Dodie Wilson, Heather Gerding, Mel Norland, Leslie, Hasina, and Doni**. **Michele Minciski** delivered the big poster to the Golden Crane. Thank you, **Ruby Moon**, for posting our sign.



Alan draws the North America map

Then to get us ready for our open house, a retinue of parents came in to spiff up the classroom and our school yard and garden. **Matt Hulstrunk** changed the many light bulbs that were out in our classrooms, **Kevin Matsuba, Deb Alba, Alissa Moses, and Heather Gerding** came in to clean our classroom shelves and materials. **Keith Moses** came in twice to mow the lawn and trim borders, and **Dave and Deb Alba, Alissa Moses, and Kim Gratz** came in also at least a couple of times to weed, dig up and divide plants, prune back shrubs and trees, move plants, plant new plants and install new stepping stones (wow!). **Kim Gratz** also put together a list of late summer and fall

flowering plants for our garden to enhance our flower arranging for the beginning of school next fall. And for the Open House itself, we were joined by our wonderful parent hosts: **Kim Gratz** (came twice and brought luscious refreshments!), **Dodie Wilson, Carol Hulstrunk, Janel Lawrence, Shawn Foley, and Alissa Moses**.

Leftover from our auction fundraiser were the Thank You cards. **Michele Mincinski** did all the address labels and got the notes and envelopes to us. On the way to the Kathleen Lloyd lecture **Jessica Neebe, Cathryn Kasper** (our wonderful substitute teacher) and **Cindy Guschov** (CMS elementary teacher) helped me put the address labels on the envelopes and then writing a little personal note in each were **Hattie Muir, Kim Gratz, Gretchen Goode, Janel Lawrence, Michele Mincinski, Kerry Boysen, Heather Gerding, Janelle Lohr, Leslie and Phyllis**. Thank you very much!



Isabella polishes a brass dish

Coming up this summer, **Kerry Boysen and Kati Albin** have signed up to paint the girls' bathroom! Yeah!

Enriching our classroom over the past months are some new books added to our shelves. **Ben Boysen** presented our classroom with a



Madison and Hazel read words together.

classic, *Wee Gillis*, Madison gave us *Odd Boy Out: Young Albert Einstein*, and Anna Wilson gave us *The Biggest Bear* to celebrate their birthdays. And as Doni mentioned in our class news, Kallen and Kynlee Albin donated an Asian Pear tree for our garden to replace the one that died. So maybe even this fall we'll be biting into some luscious, crispy pears! Thank you!

Thank you all for the amazing amount of work that you are doing and have done - we are very grateful and we know that we absolutely can't manage without you!!



Maggie Rose grinds dried herbs



Board Bio

Lorri Hendon has been on my board the next longest after Joan Extrom. She brings her highly valued skills in communication and mediation to our board... not to mention she is a delight to be around.

Day and Month of Birth: December 27

Briefly describe your background and interests/hobbies: I am an active member of the Philomath Bahá'í community actively involved in many aspects of community life. I take foil-fencing classes with my older son, and will be teaching a drama course this summer.

How long have you lived in this community?
Since 1993

Family: Husband, Adel, Sons, Stefan and Theo

Educational experiences: BA in chemistry from Reed College, DO from Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine

Current type of work: Family physician in Philomath

Past board experience, including leadership positions held:

This is my first position on a board of directors, but I have served on the local governing body of the Bahá'í community for a number of years, and gained much from that experience in group communication and decision-making with an aim toward unified action.