
Philomath Montessori School

May 2011

For the Families and Friends of the Philomath Montessori School



Classroom News

As you may know, we have been studying the Democratic Republic of the Congo, formerly, Zaire. We have learned not to call it the Congo as that is a completely separate, neighboring country. Sometimes we call it the DRC. We have learned about the richness of its tropical forests and the fascinating wildlife there. We learned that because the vegetation in a rain forest grows so thickly, the inhabitants of rainforests evolve to be rather small, allowing them to move more effectively through tight spaces. The African elephants are a good example of this as are the Efe Pygmies who rarely grow to be taller than 4 feet. We have a set of cards available to the children that illustrate the ways of the Efe and have descriptions on the back for those children who can read. The cards show how they meet their human needs such as food, shelter, clothing, transportation, art and social structure. We have also focused on the fascinating mountain gorillas and how they meet some of

the same needs. Of course, there's no clothing! When we discussed elephants, Alan contributed an interesting fact, which is that as elephants become elderly, they often starve to death as their teeth have been ground down over the years, rendering them useless. We then discussed how it is nature's way to winnow out the old and the sick, leaving more resources for the young who are more able to populate the species. It is cruel, but one need only look to nature to realize the truth of the Buddhist philosophy that "life is suffering."



Madison checks over her new journal entry.

Speaking of cruelty and suffering, we have touched upon the terrible violence that has devastated the DRC for so long. All we have shared with the children is that it is currently a very dangerous place for those who live there. There are many valuable minerals below the earth's surface and sadly, people fight over who has the right and

might to extract these riches. This greed and desperation are disruptive to every aspect of survival for the Congolese. We have been speaking some French, which is the official language of the DRC and have been singing a beautiful lullaby in Lingala, one of the 200 languages spoken.



Clare checks her reading.

In other matters, our playground is teeming with life and death. The other day, a child discovered a dead bird in the yard. That same morning, someone found a dead garter snake. No sooner had we buried them in the garden and lined up to go in when someone saw a live garter snake! We have seen a garter snake nearly every day lately! The children enumerated all the wildlife they encountered that day in our own backyard. They saw birds, snakes, bees, spiders and ants! We were feeling so lucky to share our space with these interesting creatures.

The children know that I love to tell them true stories about my life and I flatter myself that they love hearing them. And they never forget anything! Recently, I told about an owl I had seen and how excited I was because I never see owls. A child contradicted me, though, reminding me of the last time I had encountered owls.

"Don't you remember, Doni, you were taking the trash out and you heard a loud rustle of wings, and stood there with your mouth open while three owls swooped overhead?"

"Oh, yeah," I said.

"I had forgotten all about that time!" I also tell the children many stories about the cats and dogs I encounter at Safehaven Humane Society where I volunteer each week. The happiest stories are about the long-time residents who finally find their forever homes. I get very emotional about these adoptions and the children do as well. We are all united in our best wishes for these innocent animals. It may be a coincidence, but one week when I told them about a wonderful white German shepherd named Balto who had been at the shelter for many months, the children hoped for a good outcome for him and miraculously, he was adopted that week! We were all jubilant. The children are so compassionate, especially towards cute doggies and kitties.

This is my last newsletter for this school year, so I will take this opportunity to thank you for a wonderful year, wish all of you a happy summer break and encourage those of you who are moving on to other ventures to keep in touch and keep supporting Philomath Montessori School!

All the best,
Doni



Zach plays a game with Doni using the Geometric Solids

Newsline

- Check out our **website** - lots of changes and ways to keep you up-to-date. We will be working on it more this summer including new photos, staff bios, past meeting minutes, and updating our parent library.
- If you haven't yet, please go to our website and click on the **Facebook** icon to become one of our friends and then for heaven's sake "**Like**" us!! **Janelle Iverson**, our wonderful social media guru, is trying to connect us to the world! The local world, anyway.



Hazel puts away her activity with her mom looking on

- Please join us for our **End-of-Year Potluck** on Saturday, June 4 from 5:00 - 6:30 in our school backyard or in the classroom, if the weather is inclement. It is a special potluck - we will be celebrating Phyllis and all that she has done for us. We hope you can make it!
- If you would like to keep your current **year-round job** for the 2011-12 school year, please let us know.



Arden, Becca and Damian at the childrens' open house

- The **last day of school** will be Thursday, June 9. There will be **no extended day**.
- We are signed up to do three **Farmers Markets** - one on **Saturday, June 18** and two **Wednesdays, July 13 and August 17**. All are from 9:00 to 1:00 pm. We hope that we can persuade you to come and help us. If you are willing, please sign up!! We already have the crafts ready and together. We just need you!



Maggie Rose works with the world map

- Please be sure to save Saturday, August 27 - it's our **Parent Work Day**. We have a lot of work to do to get the classroom and the

outdoor area ready for the new school year. It will also be a great way to start the year - getting reacquainted with our Montessori community and meeting all the new families and their children. Please join us!!



Charlotte can now reach the first monkey bar!!

Thank Yous - May 2011

We have a new look for our Thank You section - one that Doni has been encouraging me to adopt for a long time. I was always a little reluctant, because I felt I would be shortchanging our volunteers by not expressing our full gratitude. However, I'm going to the other side confident that you already know how very grateful we are and pleased that it will free me up to do what I love to do and never have enough time to do - create new activities and materials for the classroom. And I figure that's where you'd like me to spend my time anyway!



Ben washes his boot as Hazel and Cedric watch

Classroom Projects

- ✓ Prepared sewing cards for classroom: **Janel Lawrence, Delfina Hernandez and Lua Siegel.**

- ✓ Preparing sewing cards for our Farmers Market booth: **Delfina Hernandez, Leslie Cohen, and Marie Cortes**
- ✓ Prepared many different and elaborate kinds of paper for drawing and painting: **Janel Lawrence and Beth Jordan**
- ✓ Cut felt snakes and fish for sewing activity: **Beth Jordan**
- ✓ Prepared and sewed journals: **Delfina Hernandez**
- ✓ Maintained tasting bottle activity: **Barbara Hinds-Cook**
- ✓ Cleaned our classroom shelves and materials: **Debbie Alba and Becca Lynch, the Hernandez-Garcia family, the Boysens, and the Lynch family**



Izel shows her mom how to make a snowman at the open house

School Yard Work

- ✓ Mowed, trimmed borders, pruned and weeded: **Debbie Alba, Alissa and Keith Moses, Dawn Anzinger, Christian Petrovich, Andre Myrhe**
- ✓ Weeded at the College United Methodist Church work party: **Janel Lawrence, Doni and Leslie**

Thank You Notes for Auction Fundraiser

- ✓ Tracked and organized data then printed cards and labels: **Stony Lohr**
- ✓ Cut, folded and labeled Thank You cards: **Amber Grapoli**
- ✓ Wrote and sent note cards: **Hinds-Cook family, Christian Petrovich, Doni, Leslie, and Phyllis**



Ian reads with his mom in the Sunflower room at the open house

- ✓ ...If You Lived With the Indians of the Northwest Coast book: **Zaiya Garza**
- ✓ The Tenth Good Thing About Barney book: **Maggie Rose Mersman**
- ✓ Glow in the Dark Constellations book: **Clare Boysen**
- ✓ Linda Yapp and Friends CD: *For the Love of Hawaii*: **Charlotte Irwin**
- ✓ Gift cards from Shonnards Nursery: **Dhabih and Rahmat Plaire**
- ✓ African art print: **Bill Brock**
- ✓ For Jennifer's art class: **Beth Jordan**

Other Projects

- ✓ Dismantled Footwise window display: **Carol, Jenna and Alan Hulstrunk and Christi McLaren and Anya Mae Panose**
- ✓ Posted fliers for our March Open House and Enrolling Now posters: **Andrea Myrhe, Rory Plaire and Lua Siegel, Liesl Ralston, Delfina Hernandez, Stony and Janel Lohr, Mel Norland, Carol Hulstrunk, Becca Lynch, Kerry Boysen, Doni and Phyllis**
- ✓ Put up poles and hung our school banner: **Dave Alba**
- ✓ Corvallis GT and MOM Magazine articles: **Writer: Doni, PR person: Nina Williams**
- ✓ Put up our Enrolling Now banner: **Mel Norland and Alleck**
- ✓ Hosted our March Open House: **Delfina Hernandez-Garcia, Audrey and Brian Irwin, Dawn Anzinger and Christian Petrovich, and Amber Grapoli**
- ✓ Recruitment Committee work: **Kerry Boysen, Barbara Hinds-Cook, Carol Hulstrunk, Janelle Iverson, Mel Norland, Andrea Myrhe, and Nina Williams**
- ✓ Papa's Pizza Fundraiser: **Organizer: Doni, Supporters: Everyone!!**



Alleck and Eliason working hard

Donations

- ✓ Burke Museum Box rental: **Plaire-Siegel Family**