

# Philomath Montessori School Newsletter

DECEMBER 2018



## Senegal: A tale of two tongues

By Doni Manning-Cyrus

Our study of Iceland has come to an end and I miss thinking and talking about that remarkable country. But now I get to learn about Senegal! Located on the Cap-Vert Peninsula, it is the westernmost country in Africa. Mostly grassland with three major rivers, it supports about 70% of the population in subsistence farming. Given that over half of its people live below the poverty line, this farming is vital to people's very existence. Peanuts are a major export and it hosts a variety of awesome animals such as lions, warthogs, baboons, hippos, leopards and crocodiles.

The official language of Senegal is French, a product of colonization, but the lingua franca is a tribal language called Wolof. Many different languages are spoken in the home, but when people meet on the street or conduct business, it is done in Wolof. Official government business takes place in French. We are learning phrases from both languages. We are so lucky that Natalie speaks French. She is a remarkable resource. Her Wolof is almost as bad as mine, however! We'll have to work on that. We have been singing songs in several West African tongues and will sing some French songs too. Jessica taught us "Bonjour Mes Amis" and I hear kids singing it to themselves as they do their math or scrub an underlay.

Most Senegalese are Muslim. We have shared some information about this major Judeo-Christian religion and will learn much more. For the older kids, we have been reading some wonderful indigenous folktales that are endearingly familiar. I'll be reading along and suddenly realize that this story is a version of "Cinderella"! And, of course, Anansi the Spider and Zomo the Trickster Rabbit have morphed into the Brer Rabbit character from the Uncle Remus stories. Our terrific library parent, Karen Remedios, has found a great cache of books about Senegal for us to enjoy. We have been learning a traditional poem of Africa called



Doni leads a group of students playing percussion instruments. From left are Greta, Darwin, Lili W., Kaia, Darby (background) and Astrid.

"African Lullaby" and I will include it for your enjoyment:

### African Lullaby

Someone would like to have you for her child  
but you are mine.  
Someone would like to rear you on a costly mat  
but you are mine.  
Someone would like to place you on a camel  
blanket  
but you are mine.  
I have you to rear on a torn old mat.  
Someone would like to have you as her child  
but you are mine.

As our unit continues, we will learn, or at least listen to, some lovely poems by African American poets that celebrate Africa and its diaspora.

Jessica and I have conferenced with all our families and it is so good to connect with you all this way, get your feedback and input, and share with you some insight into your child's life at school. We are so very blessed to work with such committed and invested parents. We know that there are plenty of school teachers who offer parent-teacher conferences and do not get the enthusiastic participation that we enjoy. For that, and for all you bring to our work here at PhMS, we remain very grateful. We love our work, challenging as it is, and we thank our lucky stars every day that we get to practice and grow here with you. We wish you all a wonderful Winter Break, a happy holiday season and all the best in 2019! I invite you to read an old post on our blog titled "Winter Break Fun" from December 2010. It contains some simple ideas to help fill those long winter days.

## Thank You!

### CLASSROOM CLEANING

September – Alicia Jones and Kimberly Purdy

October – Leah and Rachel Houtman

November – Skye and Jacob Nielson

### DONATIONS

Sunflowers – Rachel Oehler

Icelandic salt – Noorloss family

Extra clothes for girls –

Houtman and Hulick-Berry families

### REPAIRS AND MAINTENANCE

Change lightbulbs – Tim Warren

Reattach fence board – Kevin Hulick

Take out yard debris as needed – Leah Houtman and Kyle McGann

Restroom rescue! – Jocelyn Eisenlohr and Kyle McGann

Sanitizing – Alicia Jones

### MORE YEAR-ROUND

#### AND SPECIAL EVENT PARENTS

Outdoor Maintenance – Alicia Jones and Jocelyn and Fred Eisenlohr

Meeting Secretary – Alalia Berry

Online Auction – Amy Ward and Jocelyn Eisenlohr

Marketing and Social Media – Grace Vilagi

### OTHER

Stuff AGC envelopes – Jocelyn Eisenlohr, Shannon Zuschlag and Karen Remedios

Phone Tree – Alicia Jones

Preparing collage materials – Brittini McGann

Sponsorship calls and mailings – Karen Remedios

### CHILD/PARENT NATURE

#### PRINTING DAY!

A special thank you to **Duncan and Melany Berry (Laura Hulick's grandparents)** for leading *another* community nature printing activity! We had a great turnout, with the children getting to make prints of leaves, feathers and fish — even a piranha! It was a wild time and we are grateful to the Berrys for making it happen.

Here's wishing all our wonderful families and friends a joyous, relaxing winter break. Be sure to factor in some quiet time during this season of celebrations. And above all, safe travels wherever you go. Big hugs from all of us!



**Kaia drives the bus, taking Zedro (from right), Sophia, Rose (standing), Roo, Hudson, Darby, Darwin, Laura and Ashton for a ride.**



**FAR LEFT: Hudson (from left), Swift and Jay take a break from filling up a wheelbarrow.**

**LEFT: Zedro poses (with style!) with his playdough holiday**

## Newsline

❖ Our last day of class before Winter Break begins is **Thursday, December 20**. School resumes on **Monday, January 7**.

❖ Please join us for our next parent meeting on **Thursday, January 17**, at 6 p.m.

❖ A dine out event is planned for **January 19** at *Caves Beir & Kitchen* and will be paired with a Parent's Night Out offering from *The Little Gym*.

❖ There will be no school on **Monday,**

**January 21**, in observation of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day.

❖ There will be no school on **Thursday, February 14**, for an In-service Day and **Monday, February 18**, in observation of President's Day.

❖ Our Benefit Concert – **The Love of Learning Annual Fundraiser** – will be on **Saturday, March 9**, from 7 to 11 p.m. at the Corvallis Oddfellows Hall.

# Donations on target

The Annual Giving Campaign is well underway! We are about five weeks in and have just over two weeks to go. I am happy to report that we are on target to reach our two goals:

- \$8,000 in total contributions.
- 100% participation by current families and board members.

We have topped \$4,000 and are seeing 65% participation by current families and 50% participation by our board. Isn't that wonderful?!? Many thanks to all who have generously contributed. Your generosity makes our program strong and sustainable and for that we offer our sincere appreciation. We will be accepting contributions for the AGC until December 31.



It's hard to resist wanting to help our wonderful students! Here are the full-day students gutting pumpkins on a sunny fall day. Working at the front table, from left, are Isaac, Roen, Cedar and Roo, while Cassidy, Nora and Greta work behind them.

## Holiday inspiration: gift and activity ideas

Dear parents,  
I thought I would resurrect an old handout on holiday gift ideas – from 1991! Thanks to Pauline for creating it many years ago. Here it is – I hope you find it helpful!

— Jessica

### KITS

Kits are gifts that can be gathered by parents and the child adds the imagination or they can be the ingredient for a project that the child completes. They are great ideas for putting together a gift for a special friend. In putting together these kits, you'll find that their appeal and use will last longer if the kit is an attractive basket or box and items of more than one have their own container as well (i.e. Band-Aids, pens, nails, pins, etc.)

**Doctor Kit** – Band-Aids, stethoscope, tongue depressors, syringes, strips of cloth, tape.

**Baking Kit** – Cookie sheet, spatula, sprinkles, cookie dough, cookie cutter, tube icing, rolling pin.

**Cooking Kits** – Bag the ingredients for some delicious treat along with the instructions. Everyone has some recipes that a child could use.

**Dishwashing Kit** – Dishpan, soap, dish towel and cloth, metal scrubber, apron, bottle brush.

**Office Kit** – Small stapler, paper clips, rubber bands, notebook, envelopes, hole

punch, pencil, pen, stamps, stamp pad, rubber stamp.

**Carpentry Kit** – Hammer, saw, drill, measuring tape, plane, sandpaper, nails.

**Shoe Polishing Kit** – Polish, dauber, soft cloths, small brush.

**Gardening Kit** – Vegetable or flower seeds, peat pots, starting soil, small shovel, weeding fork, child's sprinkling can.

**Art Kit, Sculpture** – modeling clay, clay modeling tools, cookie cutters, small rolling pin.

**Art Kit, Paint and color** – Crayons, paints, glue or glue stick, assortment of paper (construction paper, drawing paper, newsprint, etc.), scissors, pencil, felt pens.

**Art Kit, Collage** – assortment of paper, assortment of material (i.e. felt, yarn, beans, sequins, etc.), scissors, glue brush.

**Embroidery Kit** – 6½" squares of muslin with dots evenly spaced into geometric figures, flowers or whatever (but it needs to be dots), 5" hoop, thread (100% cotton), tapestry needle, pin cushion for needle, threader (sturdy version), scissors.

**Cross Stitch Kit** – 6½" squares of gingham, plus the above items for embroidery kit to complete.

### THINGS TO MAKE FOR CHILDREN

**Photobook for a small child:** Buy an inexpensive photo book. Fill the first few pages with pictures of the child with his family and

friends. Encourage your child to talk about the people and events in the pictures.

**Nail board:** You will need an inexpensive hammer, colored rubber bands, small nails with heads, and a scrap of wood about 12" x 12". You can rule out and make dots one inch apart the width and length of the board or let your child decide where the marks should be. The child hammers in the nails and stretches rubber bands from nail to nail to make infinite designs.

**His/her own dust cloths or waxing cloths:** The dust cloths in the classroom are flannel 12" x 12". For waxing, buffing cloth is 8" x 8" and applicator cloths are little pockets for two little fingers. The two waxing cloths should be the same color but differ in some way – one solid and one pattern. Add a container of wax and a wooden popsicle stick to dispense wax and you have another kit!

### THINGS TO MAKE WITH YOUR CHILD

Take a walk and collect items from nature:

**Make a centerpiece:** Take some of your collection and arrange around a small candle.

**Make a Yule Log:** Collect pine cones and greens, find a fireplace log and attach the greens and cones.

**Make a bookmark:** Use felt pieces on burlap to make a bookmark. Or find a pretty leaf or flower and put it on a heavy piece of paper and cover with clear contact paper for a bookmark.

Enjoy your holiday!