



Philomath Montessori School Newsletter

December 2019

Classroom News

Season's Greetings! As we enter the gift-giving season, there seems to be no better gift than to tell you all how wonderful and amazing your kids are. In Jessica's own words from a discussion we engaged in recently, "these kids are flourishing!" This was following our observation of a lovely school in McMinnville. I was particularly enchanted by their elementary program. Let me set the scene: Children from the ages of 6-12 all going about their activities as individuals and as groups. Some laying on the floor, some propped up on balance balls (like at a gym), some on these wobbly stools that kept the child's core engaged, some sprawled on couches,



Kaia cutting and arranging cucumbers.

others on straight-back chairs. A child now and then asks the guide if he/she could hold one of the classroom rats as they worked. Permission granted. There was one guide and one assistant in this classroom of approxi-

mately 25-30 kids. There was a small, glass-enclosed library where one could work in silence, but still see into the classroom. There was a full kitchen where kids helped themselves to a variety of snacks. There was a group next to me who wanted to play a game about the table of elements. One girl looked in her pocket notebook and said, "I've accomplished everything for the week except my leisure reading, so, yes, I can play!" Kids were doing everything from knitting to reading compound words, to research, to complex math I could not understand. No less than 3 kids were playing different musical instruments. And yet the room felt calm and controlled, noisy and happy all at once. I enjoyed it so much

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Swift practices tying.

Newsline

and was truly inspired by the capabilities and social cohesion I saw. A rat relieved himself on a young lady and she reported it to the assistant. She disappeared to change her clothes and pop her pants in the washing machine with a load. (There was a lot of laundry being done in all the classrooms at this school. They used a fresh cloth towel for every hand-washing!) When she returned to her friend, her friend expressed her concern that the girl was now wearing a short skirt and bare legs and they would be going outdoors later. Sweet. Although it is regrettable that there is currently no Montessori elementary in our area, it was still a great reminder to me of the greatness our kids have within.



Darwin making a llama.

Meanwhile, back at the ranch, wondrous things are happening. Last week, as I left group to use a tissue, the children sang, all by themselves, “Jamaica Faarewell” and “Morningtown Ride!” They sang all together, no one racing ahead or singing obnoxiously louder than the others. It was lovely! We adults applauded. One day just after this, when it was time to line up to go inside, all the kids came



Sophia and Greta working on the beginning stages of making booklets.

running, got right in line facing forward and were quiet! It was miraculous!

It is also very gratifying that the children are enjoying our cultural studies so much. When we celebrated Jamaican Heroes’ Day, a couple of the older children were able to tell us quite a lot of information about Queen Nanny of

- Our last day of class before Winter Break begins is **Thursday, December 19**. School resumes on **Monday, January 6**.
- Please join us for our next **parent meeting on Thursday, January 16 at 6:00**.
- There will be **no school on Monday, January 20**, in observation of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day.
- Our **Online Auction** will run from **February 7 – 18**.
- There will be **no school on Monday, February 18**, in observation of President’s Day.



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



Doni cutting a pineapple with the children.

the Maroons, who helped many enslaved people to escape to the mountains and start a new life intermarrying with the Arawak Indians. And when we came to the end of our Jamaica unit, many of the kids were eager to know which country we would be learning about next. (We are currently studying Peru.) This enthusiasm is awesomely contagious!

As chance would have it, one of our favorite composers passed away recently and we had an impromptu celebration of life for this person who has brought so much joy to the world. Irving Louis Burgie, the composer of “Day-o” and “Jamaica Farewell” as well as Barbados’ national anthem passed away at 95 on December 3, 2019. He brought



Rose working on embroidery.

Calypto music to the world, enjoyed close friendships with other musicians such as Harry Belafonte, was married to the same woman for 50 years and earned a lot of royalties on his music. He was visiting his cousin’s house when he collapsed and died, so we know he was active right up to the end. I think it made an impression on the kids that even though Mr. Burgie is no longer with us, his music will go on and on.



Jay clipping carrot tops.

As I write my Christmas cards this season and let my loved ones know how my life is going, I am so happy to report what a sweet class of kids I have this year. I can’t say that every year, you know! So I lump them and their families in when I count my blessings and I know your children are your greatest blessings in life as well. I don’t need Santa to bring me a thing when I spend my days surrounded by all this love and happy energy. I just wish everyone had access to this magic! Happy holidays everyone and all the best in 2020!



Sophia, Isaac, and Theo practicing the moveable alphabet.

Annual Giving Campaign Update

The Annual Giving Campaign is well underway! We are 5 weeks in and have approximately 2 weeks to go. I am happy to report that we are receiving donations daily working towards our 2 goals:

- \$8500 in total contributions
- 100% participation by current families and board members.

We have raised \$2845 with a little over 2 weeks to go and with 45% participation by current families and 60% participation by our Board. Isn't that wonderful?!? Many thanks to everyone who has 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.

Dear Parents,

I thought I would share a blog post with you from Montessori Daoshi, by Catherine McTamaney, Ed.D. in anticipation of winter break. I recommend her blog, MontessoriDaoshi.com.

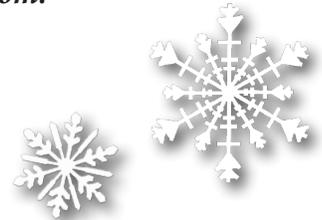
Parenting on Vacation

By Catherine McTamaney, Ed.D.

The kids are home from school. Maybe you're still working, or trying to. Maybe you're juggling grandparents or babysitters or other parents, trading off time so that you can get done all the things you need to get done despite the fact that your children are on vacation.

Remember that old chestnut, "I need a vacation from my vacation!"

While you may think of vacation as a time to relax and unwind, often the demands of work or the unpredictable schedule, new venues and new people, interfere with how restful "vacation" feels. Change your expectations, and you might find these days to be a little relaxing after all.



Don't expect familiar behavior in unfamiliar circumstances: If your children are at a vacation program, or with a babysitter, or just home with you for an extended time when they're used to being at school, expect that they'll test out those settings in new ways. Anticipate that it may take a little longer to get dressed, a little longer to get comfortable, that your children may eat less (or more!) than usual, that they may be more tired or less patient. If you know beforehand that these are the likely presentations of being out of their routine, you may be able to keep your cool a little longer, too.

Your child's idea of fun may be very different than yours. You might think going to grandma's for a week is going to be a time for your children to play with their cousins and celebrate together. But for your child, visiting unfamiliar places, or visiting

familiar places with new people can be unsettling, even when what's un-familiar is technically family. Prepare your child beforehand for what to expect, who you're likely to see and what kinds of activities you might enjoy together. Offer family photo albums to remind your children who's who in the family, and leave some blank pages to let your child know that this family get-together is likely to be worth remembering, too.

Think about ways to make vacation days memorable, but don't go overboard. Chances are, your children will be just as delighted to stay at home and help you make lunch as they would at another holiday-themed adventure. Remember that children need down-time, too, and the bustle of the holiday season can be both exciting and overwhelming. Don't be afraid to plan days just at home, spending time around the house, folding laundry or cleaning up together.

If your child is staying with new caregivers, be sure to talk with your child about the people and places you're likely to encounter each day. Again, don't make a fuss about it. Just matter-of-factly tell your child, during a quiet time, who will be caring for him or her the next day and where they'll be staying. Remember, young children struggle to understand the passage of time in the same way that we do, so you're better to describe upcoming events in terms of concrete experiences your child understands. "We'll have two more bedtimes before we visit Grandpa." "After one more night sleep, Abbie will come to spend the day with you." Don't invite worry, but instead, describe the changes with confidence and ease, modeling for your child that you trust the caregivers who'll be joining you and that he or she should, too.

Prepare for cabin fever. Think ahead about how many days your child is off from school and how you can balance those days to make them memorable and easy for the whole family. Some families will wrap familiar household games so the child opens one each day during vacation, giving a special moment on each day and creating a running timeline of how many days are left before we return to school. Other families will do the same with a number of

envelopes with cards in them to open with details of each day. You might ask your children to help contribute to a vacation wish-list of different things to do or see each day. Make a list as long as the number of days of break, write down each idea on a small post-it note, and draw a note each day to decide what adventures you'll have. Again, no need for extravagance: ideas can be as simple as, "Let Mom read aloud a chapter from her favorite chapter book," or "Help Dad make meatloaf for dinner." You can stick the post-it notes to a family calendar to create a visual diary of the time you've spend together, or use them in a scrapbook with drawings and photos you take each day. These simple ways of making the passage of time more concrete will help your child to understand what "a week off from school," really means, and help to make each day seem special.

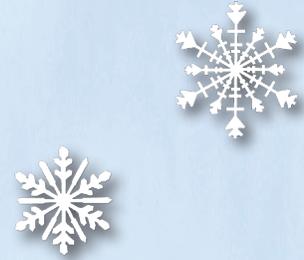
Vacation doesn't need to mean an expensive trip or extravagant adventures. Simple time at home, connecting as a family, your phones in the other room and your attention focused on your child, can be far more rewarding and rejuvenating than a busy trip during the busiest season of the year. Make the most of these small moments together.



Ashton and Penelope washing dishes.



Thank You



CLASSROOM CLEANING

October: **Elise LeBoldus & family**

November: **Alicia Jones and Sarah Andresen & families**

TAKE HOME PROJECTS

Iron Laces of bow tying frame: **Jocelyn Eisenlohr**

Rebuild outdoor picnic tables: **Kirby Phelps**

Build outdoor coat rack/shelf: **Chris Russo**

Make playdough: **Alicia Jones**

Wash laundry: **Kimberly Purdy**

Trim fringe from towels: **Brittni McGann**

Wash & bleach white towels: **Alicia Jones**

DONATIONS

Sunflowers: **Elise LeBoldus and Brittni McGann**

Rose petals: **The Eisenlohr family and the Ward family**

Raincoat donation: **Hulick-Berry family**

REPAIRS & MAINTENANCE

Built 2 new children's picnic tables for outdoor area:
Kirby Phelps

Remove woodworking table and vice: **Kevin Hulick**

Built outdoor coatrack/water bottle shelf: **Chris Russo**

Repair greenhouse door: **Tyler Jones**

MORE YEAR-ROUND AND SPECIAL EVENT PARENTS

Online Auction: **Jocelyn Eisenlohr & Elise LeBoldus**

Marketing and Social Media: **Autumn Benton**

Montessori Services Coordinator: **Elise LeBoldus**

Volunteer Coordinator: **Posy Busby**

OTHER

Stuff AGC envelopes: **Jocelyn Eisenlohr & Shannon Zuschlag**

Phone Tree: **Jocelyn Eisenlohr**

Schoolyard clean-up: **Jocelyn Eisenlohr, Marcus Benton, Candace Russo, Rachel Houtman, Jeremy Andresen**

Cutting shapes for collage: **Brittni McGann**

Sanitizing: **Alicia Jones**

Crochet face washing puffs: **Amy Phelps**

Cut & hem dust cloths: **Jocelyn Eisenlohr**

Cut muslin for cloth sewing: **Jocelyn Eisenlohr**

Mend Jamaican flag: **Jocelyn Eisenlohr**

Sort and catalogue NA flags: **Tim Warren**

Trace felt shapes for ornament sewing: **Amy Ward**

