

Montessori Matters



Week of November 7, 2016 • www.msasc.org • (864) 226-5344

Dates to Remember :

Nov. 7-11

School Picture Week

Nov. 8

Election Day

All Programs Closed

Nov. 10

Primary Risers Field Trip to Greenville Zoo

Nov. 18

Primary Thanksgiving Meal

Nov. 19

MSA Work Day

9:00 AM – 3:00 PM

Nov. 14-18

Infant/Toddler & Primary
Parent/Teacher Conferences

Nov. 22

Thanksgiving Blessing

Nov. 23-25

Thanksgiving Holiday

All Programs Closed

Dec. 5

Early Dismissal 11:30 for

Primary-High School

Holiday Program

at Boulevard Baptist Church
at 6:30 PM

Dec. 16

Early Dismissal 10:00

Dec. 19-23

Holiday Break

Extended Day available

Dec. 26-Jan 3

Holiday Break

All programs Closed

From the Head of School

No matter which side of the political aisle upon which you reside, I'm sure that we can all agree that this Presidential election (which ends tomorrow) has been particularly contentious and heated. As Montessori educators, we lament especially the fact that our nation's children have been witness to the embattled tones made public by incessant, acerbic advertisements, bumper stickers, Internet talk....the list goes on. Dr. Montessori suggested that children learn to become adults by watching them – a sobering truth and daunting responsibility, to be sure.



When discussing her method, Montessori said that, "Children are formally instructed in social skills they will use throughout their lives, for example, saying "please" and "thank you," interrupting conversations politely, requesting rather than demanding – and greeting guests and each other warmly." Her life-affirming way of educating pupils included direct instruction and modeling in what we Montessorians know as rules for "Grace and Courtesy," – a concept sorely lacking in today's society at large.

Here at MSA, we believe that teaching your children the basic tenets of Grace and Courtesy is foundational to their Montessori education. I recently visited a classroom in our lower grades and was so pleased to hear students speak to each other civilly. I heard children saying to each other, "I can help you with that, if you like," and, "Here, let's work through this together," and, "I can get those materials for us." Close to the start of the school year, my mother and sister visited our Infant and Toddler department and were astonished to see children helping each other set their lunch tables and using the best "Please" and "Thank you" that they could muster at that tender age. Grace and Courtesy, in the educational sense, also means that at the core of our conversations with children is a deep sense of respect, almost reverence, for the individual they are becoming. You will never hear "baby talk" from our staff to even the youngest of our students, as we believe that it is a violation of that core respect for the child.

Several weeks ago, our Upper School faculty engaged in a rather lengthy discussion with our Middle and High school students on the subject of Grace and Courtesy. Included in the student-driven workshop were table conversations deconstructing our School's Peace Pledge. Students discussed its language in depth, addressing such questions as, "What does the vision of peaceful co-existence with all other living creatures of the earth actually look like here at MSA?", and, "What does the phrase, 'peace is not the absence of conflict, but the willingness to work out conflicts peacefully' truly mean?"

I am very proud to be a part of a community of learners that places great value on the manner in which we speak to each other and to our students. At a time when Civil Discourse seems to be disappearing from our culture, it is refreshing to know that here in our small corner of the world, we are teaching children that the skills of Grace and Courtesy are important and worth knowing, and will eventually set them apart from others in a good way. My e-mail signature includes a Latin phrase dating back to Cicero: "Emollit Mores Nec Sinit Esse Feros," which, loosely translated, means, "Learning Softens Manners and Does Not Permit Mankind to Be Cruel", – a really nice thought upon which to ruminate in today's world.

In what ways can you partner with us to extend and model lessons of Grace and Courtesy at home for your child?

Yours in Montessori Education,
Vance

Seventh Graders Community Service

Seventh graders serve our school community by taking care of the recycling program. On any given Friday morning, they can be seen shuttling paper recycling bins from classrooms all over campus to the outside collection bins. The involvement of students in the recycling program has helped make it successful.

This year our efforts to go green are continuing. Seventh graders have been charged with the task of helping to start a campus-wide composting initiative. While composting is already being done in our greenhouse area, it is not yet being done in the classrooms. The job of the seventh graders was to put together a presentation to teach kids the importance of composting in the classroom.

Our seventh graders did their research and put their heads together. In true Montessori style, they came up with a clever story to



teach students about composting. Last week they shared their story with the primary classes.

Not only did the story capture the imagination of the little ones, it gave them the facts about what food waste can be composted and what this does to help the environment. The primary students seemed excited about this opportunity to help our planet!



These 7th graders did a wonderful job in developing and presenting the concept of composting to our classrooms. They worked together in collaboration to produce an effective presentation. They were poised, confident, and engaging as they shared their story. They were wonderful role models to the younger children and have set the stage for a successful composting project!

Upper Elementary Community Service

Fifth grader Faith listens attentively to a primary student practice her reading skills during Community Service. All of the fifth graders really enjoy their weekly visits to the primary classes. They are learning how to be positive role models in the classroom and on the playground.



Rebecca Moore, our Upper Elementary history and science teacher, was in Nepal last week and loved taking a picture of this Peace Pole!



Physics students performing an experiment to understand how the height and angle affect the velocity of an object.

Ten Thousand Villages Holiday Gift Fair

Ten Thousand Villages Holiday Gift Fair - December 6 & 7 from 10-4 in the MSA Administration Building. Unique gifts under \$12!



TEN THOUSAND VILLAGES®

Sponsored by Ten Thousand Villages, the fair will feature gifts and artifacts from artists in third-world countries. Priced at \$12 and under, come shop for "one of a kind" holiday gifts for your friends and family. And a portion of the sales will be sent back to the artists in support of their continued work. Shop for unique gifts at a great price - here at MSA for one day only!

SCHOOL PICTURE WEEK SCHEDULE- WEEK OF NOVEMBER 7-11

	Monday November 7	Tuesday November 8	Wednesday November 9	Thursday November 10	Friday November 11
8:30-9:30	Infant 1 Toddler 2 Toddler 3	NO SCHOOL	Infant 2 Toddler 1	LE	Middle School
9:30-10:30	High School	NO SCHOOL	Primary 2 Primary 1 Primary 3	UEL	Siblings and Make-Up

Gathering Blessings Holiday Service Opportunities

November is here and Thanksgiving is just around the corner. At this time of year, it is our custom to remember those in need and to gather “blessings” for them in our classrooms. Following traditions of the past many years, we are offering several opportunities to help others during this holiday season.

First, we are collecting Pennies for People. To participate, your child may bring some change (pennies, nickels, dimes, quarters) or dollars to school to add to the Pennies for People jar in each classroom. Instead of taking money from mom or dad, we encourage students to “earn” these donations by doing extra chores or by giving from their own piggy banks. This money will be used to help needy families in the Anderson area.

Next, each classroom will be collecting canned and nonperishable food items for two agencies in town that feed the hungry. Items most needed to replenish the shelves of the Emergency Soup Kitchen include rice, pasta, pasta sauce, dried beans, vegetables and soups. The super-sized cans and packages of food are most helpful to this agency, which serves 60 – 80 hot meals each weekday. In addition, we are collecting nonperishable “shelf-ready” items (such as fruit cups, granola bars, soups with pop tops, raisins) for emergency meals for the participants of Meals on Wheels.

Finally, we are gathering toiletries and personal care items for Clean Start, an Anderson agency that offers homeless people a place to clean up, shower and wash clothes. Toiletry items needed include soap, shampoo, toothbrushes, toothpaste, razors, shaving cream, detergent and bleach. Those individual-sized soaps and shampoos that you may have collected while traveling or on vacation are perfect for this project.

Brown paper bags have been sent home with each student to remind you of the blessings we are collecting. Please bring all donations to school by Tuesday, Nov. 22. That morning we will have our communal Thanksgiving gathering. As we exchange blessings with each other, we will gather blessings to send forth to the Anderson community. We hope that these opportunities to help others will make the holidays more meaningful for you and your family.

Louise Knisley
Community Service Coordinator

