

The Montessori Schoolhouse

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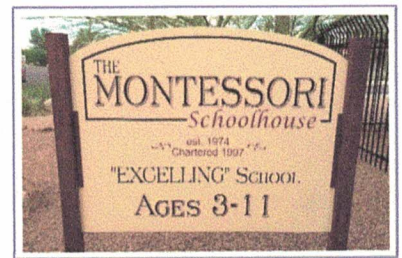
Dear Parents,

WOW! What a Valentine's Day! S'mores, juice boxes, Chinese candy! Flowers and artisanal plants! We loved everything! A good time was definitely had by all! Thanks, Everyone!

So, what else have we been doing in the classroom besides raucous celebrations?

LOWER ELEMENTARY

We have enthusiastically made our way to China, both Ancient and Modern. We are marveling at the vast number of everyday items invented by the clever Chinese: umbrellas, paper, printing, porcelain, the compass, SILK(!!!), just to name a few. You must stop in to see our actual, homegrown silkmoth cocoons. AMAZING! Then there's the TERRACOTTA ARMY with its 8000 life-size (or bigger) soldiers, horses and chariots. All made of clay, created in 221 B.C. and not discovered until 1974! AMAZING! Well, I could go on and on. Come in and see our very full China Object Basket and see all the stories it tells....



Upcoming Events and Information

RODEO BREAK

Thurs. & Fri. Feb 21st – 22nd
NO SCHOOL

SPRING BREAK

Fri. Mar 22nd – Fri. Mar 29th
NO SCHOOL
School resumes Mon. Apr 1st

UPPER ELEMENTARY CLASS

AzMERIT PREP & TESTING

-Prep Apr 1st & 2nd
-Testing Apr 3rd-5th

AIMS SCIENCE TEST

4th GRADE CLASS

Test Tues. Apr 16th

APRIL BREAK DAY

Fri. Apr 19th (1 day only)
NO SCHOOL

REMEMBER TO MAKE A TAX CREDIT DONATION BEFORE APRIL 15th!



We just wrapped up a mini-unit on **Simple Machines**. The students have all become engineers, observing the forces and work of levers, inclined planes, pulleys and the rest. We move on now to our big spring **Science** unit, **Human Anatomy**, our “pre-med” unit. This will have its usual highlights, such as making “blood” with Cheerios and marshmallows to envisioning the actual length of the small intestine by stretching out a long length of twisted paper on Circle....

Math has been a potpourri of **Counting Money** at the **French Café** to **Multiplication Sets** to learning to decode **Word Problems**. We will move on soon to **Graphing** which interestingly, is one of the students’ favorite activities!

And, speaking of favorites, we have recently been right in the heart of our **Poetry** study and, as usual, turning out surprisingly beautiful and delightful work. Please check out the poems mounted up on the wall in the foyer and classroom and I have attached one to this newsletter for your enjoyment.

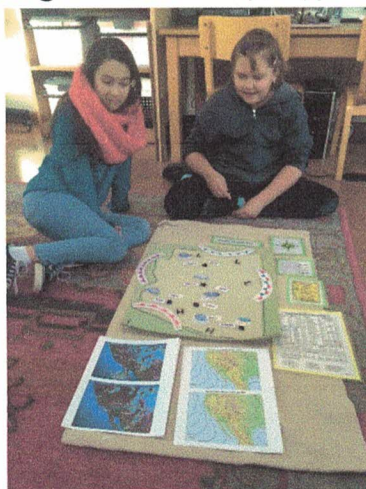
The students – all of them – never cease to amaze me....

UPPER ELEMENTARY

After the new year, Upper Elementary began a new **Geography** unit exploring the **United Kingdom**. We traveled through the 40 shades of green in **Northern Ireland**, listened to bagpipe music from **Scotland**, and learned about the changing of the guards at the royal palace in **England**. Our next lesson is on **Queen Elizabeth I**, and we will end our unit with tea and scones. To coincide with our unit, we are reading a novel by English author, J.K. Rowling: *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer’s Stone!*

In **Language Arts**, Upper El has been practicing **Opinion Writing**, and students have already written convincing opinion essays about whether zoos should exist -- ask your student about their opinion! In addition, we are currently in the middle of our **Poetry** unit, which began with exploring **Themes in Poetry** and moved on to lessons such as **Types of Poetry**, **Figurative Language**, and **Analyzing Poetry**. Our final poetry lesson will be about **Writing Haiku** and **Basho** (creator of Haiku), which will lead to our **Haiku Walk**, where we will write Haiku out on the playground, inspired by nature.

In **Math**, 4th and 5th grade students are exploring **Geometry** with lessons such as **Point**, **Line**, **Segment**, and **Ray**, **Types of Angles**, and will soon apply this knowledge to various **Polygons**, with a focus on **Triangles** and **Quadrilaterals**. In addition, students have also worked closely with **Area and Perimeter** and **Fractions** and **Decimal Fractions**. 3rd grade students have also been working diligently on **Area and Perimeter**. They have explored different ways to find area and are now combining their knowledge of fractions to further their exploration of this skill. Their **Geometry** unit is on the horizon!



In **Science**, the **Weather** unit is in full swing with lessons in **The Atmosphere**, **Weather Words**, **Weather Instruments**, **Weather Fronts**, and **Weather Maps**. Other lessons have included **The Water Cycle** and **Types of Clouds**. In addition, the classrooms are taking daily readings at our **Weather Center**; every day, a different student is responsible for recording the readings on the thermometer, hygrometer, and barometer. We will analyze the data at the end.

CHOIR

The Upper Elementary Choir Concert titled *A Winter Menagerie*, was a wonderful success! The choir sang delightful melodies with sophisticated texts as well as a children's song arrangement titled "I Bought Me a Cat" which featured a recurring percussion theme and ended with all the animals harmonizing their voices all at once! An audience favorite was "The Lion Sleeps Tonight." Our next concert will be scheduled in May. We will share the date and time soon!



UPDATES ON CHESS *from* COACH KEN

A total of nine Montessori Schoolhouse chess players have competed in Saturday tournaments so far this year. That's a large group, enough to form teams at several of these competitions. **And our players have performed well, winning for their school two team trophies: third place among Primary players (grade K-3) at League Match #2, on Nov. 10th, and then 3rd place among Primary players in the Un-rated Section, at League Match #3, Dec 1st.** In addition to these trophy awards, several individual players have earned ribbons for high scores: **Shivank Manga (twice!), Wyatt Haas, Charlotte Bellacose and Cielo Lopez.** Other players who have competed were **Kyrie Knapp, Graecyn Bates, Rowan LaFontain and Isaac Jorquera.**

We have a strong crop of chess players this year, some of whom have not yet tried the tournament format. We have four more events coming up and a good prospect for winning more prizes and developing more experience. **The state championships will be in Tucson this year (April 13-14) and their chances of doing well at this premier event are excellent. Go Team!**

Re-Enrollment Period is over. We are fully enrolled in all classes except preschool and look forward to another great year with our students! Yay!



A Few Reminders...



SNACK SIGN-UP ROTATION

Every day we provide a delicious snack to our hard-working students with the help of our parents. Please remember to continue to sign-up *once a month*, especially **Upper Elementary parents**, to bring snack for your child's class. *Our students thank you!*

TAX CREDIT DONATIONS Pleading....

Thank you to all those families who have already paid the Activity Fee and made a Tax Credit contribution which qualifies as a State of AZ Tax Credit. Unfortunately, we are woefully below our goal for funding our extracurricular program this year. *Contributions have fallen to levels we have not seen since 2008!* We understand that many of you are concerned about the recent new tax law changes regarding charitable donations, *however, be assured that the state of Arizona still has a dollar for dollar TAX CREDIT, \$400 per married couple and \$200 for single taxpayers, that directly reduces your tax liability/payment.* Wouldn't you rather these tax dollars go straight to your child's school than up to the state?



Please remember that Chess, Choir, PE, Bruce our minstrel, Ellen our yoga teacher, Chia-Chun, Shen and Woan Ching are all paid directly by your TAX CREDIT dollars. Please do your part to help us continue these enrichment programs by contributing today if you have not yet done so. Even a small donation will benefit your child and the children of The Montessori Schoolhouse! And you have until April 15th to donate!

Thank You~

So many of you help us all the time to keep our physical plant in repair and our school in operation. Here are our most recent Thank You's:



- To **John Calor** AGAIN, for always being willing to help in any way, big or small.
- To **Allen Reilley** for the **MAGNIFICENT** new metal gate. We **LOVE** it and appreciate all the little and big things you do for us.
- To **Carlos Ortiz** who always lets our parents use his lot to park on west of Mountain Avenue.
- And to **Chris Meinecke** who makes our school grounds beautiful with trees and various interesting looking plants.

Enjoy Rodeo Break everyone!

Regine, Hannah, Olive, Perla, Paige, Maddie, Emily, Alicia,
Gabriella, Samantha, Rosemary, Nancy & Kristine



Hello Nighttime

By: Ryer

The clouds are disappearing

One by one.

A sheet of darkness with
Glistening drops of paint

Falls over the sky.

Hello nighttime.