



## VMS Weekly News - December 23, 2016

*Our care of the children should be governed not by the desire to 'make them learn things', but by the endeavor always to keep burning within them the light which is called intelligence. Maria Montessori*

### Primary 1 Classroom

*- Miss Ty, Miss Cristina and Miss Rebecca*

This week, my class and I strung popcorn and cranberries into colorful streamers so we could hang them on the fence behind our room and also on the trees and bushes. We talked about the birds in the winter, and how the plants are not producing enough seeds and berries now, and they need our help to give them food. I had several helpers in this endeavor!



As I write this last little blurb for this semester's newsletter, I think back upon the tremendous growth and development of the entire class. It is such a sweet reflection for me, to watch in my mind's eye those first moments of meeting the new children and them meeting me; and then re-connecting to the returning ones – so confident and knowledgeable about Montessori! I think of my work on the first lessons and the expectations of behavior. I think of the careful adding of exercises in each of our areas: practical life, sensorial, science, geography, language and math. And through all those additions and lessons, each child was growing and developing. They were growing in their independence, their self-direction, their knowledge and their joy in learning. It was – and continues to be – an amazing experience.

I wish each of you a wonderful holiday and a Happy New Year.



## Primary 2 Classroom

- Miss Chris and Miss Holly

As part of our social curriculum, conflict resolution is an integral step to children becoming peaceful, independent and respectful. I have introduced the concept of the Peace Rose this week, and the children have been coming together to work through any conflicts and hurt feelings that might have arisen.



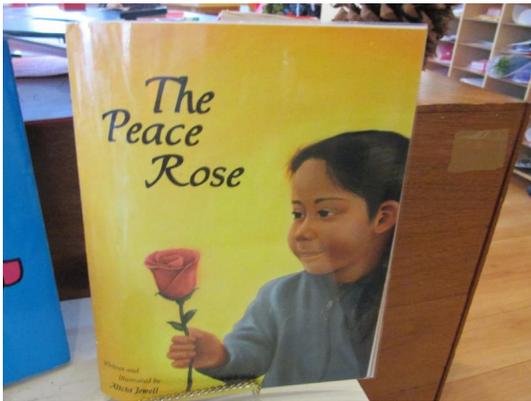
The Peace Rose method of problem solving allows children to recognize and express their own feelings as well as learn respect for the other child's feelings. A vase holding the Peace Rose is made available to the children at all times. The children are taught how to handle and care for the Peace Rose. When a conflict arises, one child will get the Peace Rose. While holding the Peace Rose, the child can express what they did not like or how they feel to the other child. When they are done, they pass the rose to the other child. Respect for the other person's turn to talk is stressed. The children are encouraged to use "I" words such as "I didn't like it when you hit me." Abusive or unkind language is not used when holding the Peace Rose. When the two children reach a solution or simply get over their difficulty, they put their hands on the rose and say, "friends".

The above excerpt is from Problem Solving in the Pre-Primary Montessori Classroom & The Peace Rose Method by Maggie Natzel.

The children had fun stringing popcorn and cranberries together to create bird feeders to hang on the outside trees. Brea's mom, Karyn, came into our class to help the children with this project. We placed a few strings outside our windows to see if we could attract any birds. We have a bird/squirrel watching station set up in the class, and the children are learning to identify chickadees, blue jays and cardinals that appear outside our classroom windows. We seem to also

have a friendly squirrel that likes to sit on our porch railing, eating the crackers and oranges that we put out for him.

I hope everyone has a wonderful holiday and a relaxing and healthy break.



## Elementary Classroom

- Miss Irene and Miss Nora



The students have been putting the final touches on art projects and practicing their small-group short presentations in preparation for the arrival of their parents at school on Thursday afternoon. As they practice, modifications are being made and more research is being done, revealing even more interesting information about Spain and its traditions. All parents should arrive at 1:30 p.m. on Thursday. It will take about 45 minutes, and refreshments will be served.

Our alumni Model United Nations students, Silas, Matthew and Tomas, have been working on putting together a video for another Montessori School in New Zealand. The video will include ways to prepare for the conference and what to expect once students are there. We are hoping that this connection through the Borellas will lead us to an ongoing relationship between schools, offering opportunities for students to forge friendships through pen pals.

In addition to starting a pen pal relationship with the New Zealand Montessori School, we hope to start a pen pal relationship with a public school in The Netherlands. Miss Nora's niece, Anna, a fifth grader from Holland, will be visiting our celebration. We hope to start a pen pal program when she returns to Holland. It will be fun for the students to write to someone they have met, and it is always fun to meet someone your own age from another country and hear

them speak another language. Anna is completely bilingual and speaks Dutch and English flawlessly.

Elementary I students have also been working on timekeeping, clocks, the hours and minutes. We made booklets about the hours of the day, showing what we do at different times. Finally, the elementary class had another visitor: Mrs. Borella came in with some holiday cheer! She popped an enormous amount of popcorn, and we strung it with cranberries and cheer.



## Late Day

*- Miss Weezie and Miss Cristina*

Our students had their last session of art class on Monday. We have been grateful for this rich and unique experience. The process this week focused on a "winter collage" using cool paint colors on a white background. Additional materials enhanced the technique, including cotton balls, silvery sequins, pipe cleaners and live winter greenery. The photos speak for themselves as the children demonstrate both concentration and joy in the experience.



I found some new, beautifully written and illustrated books at the Edgartown Library to expand on Miss Ty and Miss Chris's theme of feeding the birds and other animal friends in winter. There are some wonderful events planned at the island libraries for school vacation week. Let's all be cautious and try to limit screen time for children when they are not in school. Enjoy this break with

familyactivities that promote the love we share. Best wishes to all!



## Check out VMS' Online Store!

Looking for a unique item or holiday gifts? Purchase our school-themed items and support VMS at the same time. Check out our collection of t-shirts, sweatshirts, mugs and more by clicking [here](#).



## Recommended Reading

*"What do P. Diddy, Sergey Brin, and Peter Drucker have in common?"*  
by Glenn Rifkin

*"Succeeding at their own pace"* by Alex Beam, Boston Globe Columnist

## Book Corner for Parents

*"Last Child in the Woods": Saving our children from Nature-Deficit Disorder*  
by Richard Louv

*"Montessori Madness!": A parent to parent argument for Montessori education*  
by Trevor Eissler

*"Montessori: The Science Behind the Genius"* by Angeline Stoll Lillard

## Book Corner for Children

## Vineyard Montessori School

P.O. Box 994, 286 Main St, Vineyard Haven, MA 02568  
[vineyardmontessori.com](http://vineyardmontessori.com)  
(508) 693-4090

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