"Tell me and I forget. Teach me and I remember. Involve me and I learn."
~ Benjamin Franklin

Why I Love Montessori Kids!

I love Montessori kids, "bcause you cantell them they are going to try being a glacier, moving thousands of miles over thousands of years, slowymelting, and they say, "OK."
You play the classical music piece for the glacier dance and one student asks, "Is this Carmina Burana by CarlOrff?" And you say, "Why yes, it is."

If you are painting heath hen habitats and want the children to introduce new colors to the just-painted background and suggest that it be within the same color family, and lightly swirled in, like Van Gogh, they never say, "Huh?"

- Ann DuCharme, Education Director, Martha's Vineyard Museum

You're invited....

Irene and Nora would like to extend an invitation to any parent interested in observing in the Elementary classroom. Anyone interested in the VMS classroom is welcome to email nora@vineyardmontessori.com and schedule a time to observe in the classroom.
Save the Date for Big Night Out

Our “Big Night Out” is coming up in the spring. Mark your calendars for Saturday, May 6th at the Harborview Hotel in Edgartown. Many of you are asking, "How can I help?" You received an envelope with all the information necessary to get sponsors and donation items.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to ask. The BNO team is working together on creating an event you won’t want to miss!

Primary 1 Classroom
- Miss Ty, Miss Cristina and Miss Rebecca

Geography is the study of humans’ interaction with their physical environment. It is how humans live on the earth. This environment includes features of the planet, animals, plants and culture. Anytime of the year is a good time to study geography. During any of your trips, point out different landforms on a map and look for them as you travel. It is a fun road game. We have been exploring the various types of shapes our earth shows us.

In Montessori education, land and water forms typically include island and lake, peninsula and gulf, cape and bay, system of lakes and archipelago, and isthmus and strait. All the children begin working with hands-on land and water forms.
There are pre-formed shapes that can be chosen and then explored with water, plastic forms and a tiny boat. Hopefully in the spring, we will begin to construct our own replicas with clay and water in our outside environment.

Remember that Officer Max Sherman will be visiting the primary classes in a combined assembly each week for the next two weeks. Last week, he and Officer Liz Rogers reviewed some basic equipment that is used by police men and women. These meetings are invaluable as your children learn about the wonderful jobs our police provide for our community. We will be looking forward to the next few weeks!

Please respond to class parent Jen Doyle’s requests for help with the skating lessons. Thank you so much for those who already have volunteered!

Primary 2 Classroom
- Miss Chris and Miss Holly

Have you filled someone's bucket today? Are you a bucketfiller or a bucket dipper? As part of our peace education program, the children were introduced to the book titled, "Have you Filled a Bucket Today?" The book explains that each person carries an invisible bucket, and it can be filled with good thoughts, which in turn makes that person feel happy. A friend or a family member can fill your bucket by saying something kind or being helpful. In return, that person's bucket will also be filled because saying and doing kind things make you feel good about yourself. A person can, however, be a bucket dipper. When someone makes another person feel sad by doing or saying hurtful things, both persons' buckets get dipped into. Each child was able to practice being a bucket filler by role playing during our morning meeting. Role modeling at home is a wonderful way for your child to understand the concept of filling one's bucket.

Also part of the peace education curriculum is practicing mindfulness. After lunch each day, our class gathers together to learn basic body poses while trying to maintain a peaceful and harmonious environment. As the children come together around our rug, a candle is lit and the lights are turned off. We start with three cleansing breaths followed by some stretches. Introduce a body pose card, which shows a child in the pose that we are striving to achieve. The children enjoy this time, and it helps to start our afternoons with a clear head and a calm body.
Paramedics, Kyle Gatchell and Haley Krauss, came to the school to talk with the children about what it means to be a paramedic and what would happen if anyone ever got hurt at school or at home. They explained that an ambulance is like a traveling hospital, and the children were able to sit inside an ambulance and see all the equipment. Next week, Officer Max will return with his friends, the firefighters.

Elementary Classroom

- Miss Irene and Miss Nora

This week at the Museum, the students picked their topic for their heath hen habitat model. They chose from either the sand plain/grassland or the frost bottom. They sketched their scenes and then painted the backgrounds inside shoe boxes, which will serve as a diorama of the habitats. We will be spending the next few weeks working on the environment with in-house art teachers. As always, Ann and Kendra have set up a top-notch project.

The play is moving along! Joyce was delighted with the amount of students who had memorized their lines. It is really going to be a great play. Madeline came up with some great set design ideas, and the other students had fun ideas to possibly implement.

This week, we received a wonderful opportunity to see the documentary film, Plastic Oceans, at the Martha's Vineyard Film Center. On Thursday, the elementary students and teachers joined a large number of students from the Oak Bluffs School to see the devastation all around the world from trash disposal and plastic. When we returned to our classroom, we talked together about the film and what stood out. Some of the powerful takeaways discussed were the effect on ocean animals and the fact that we eat the fish that eat the plastic. At this morning’s meeting, the class brainstormed about what they could do as a group to reduce the plastic at VMS and in their homes. Madalyn Clatworthy, age 11, was inspired by the movie to take action by writing a letter to Elizabeth Warren, State Representative.

We would like to thank Minah Worley for setting us up with tickets and arranging
this opportunity for children to see the film and interface with other schools on the island.

Last Friday at the Unitarian Church, a few violin students gave solo performances to each other to show how their hard work has paid off. Students practiced the rest hold as they walked up on the stage, bowed, then proceeded to play with Miss Rebecca accompanying them on the piano. The audience looked on and supported one another with applauds after the bows.

In Elementary I, it is common practice for children to have little work brought home. This may leave you bewildered about the students’ progress. There is a great article for you to read about how Montessori schools differ from public with communication and homework. Feel free to set up an appointment if you would like to learn about a particular manipulative and how it benefits your child.

Late Day
- Miss Weezie and Miss Cristina

Our changing weather patterns have made it difficult to know how to dress for outdoor play at school; so best advice, be prepared (boots, snow pants, hats and mittens). We have been hit with winter colds and stomach viruses at school, so once again, we want to remind everyone to wash with soap and water and try to cover coughs and sneezes with an elbow or tissue. We sing,"Over, under and in between, up to our wrist to get them clean."

Students became puppeteers this week using hand motion and voice modulation to act out various characters in a familiar tale. We also read "Harold and the Purple Crayon", and children used the white board and a purple marker to recreate parts of the story.

We began a six-week session on Kids Yogamotion this week. This practice is led by Anne Caldwell and is designed for children. It focuses on fitness, fun and self-regulation.
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

"What Do You Do With An Idea?" by Kobi Yamada

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An independent non-profit school
Pre-k through sixth grade.

Fostering a lifetime love of learning, one child at a time.