“The environment is where we all meet; where all have a mutual interest; it is the one thing all of us share.”

Lady Bird Johnson

Celebrate Earth Day and Arbor Day

Earth Day is April 22nd and Massachusetts celebrates Arbor Day the last Friday in April. In recognition of these important days, each child has been given an Arbor Day seedling celebrating Massachusetts Tree Wardens and Foresters Association 100 years and growing. Please read the instructions on how to plant your seedling. Also, please enjoy the video here that celebrates Earth Day.

The Big Night Out is fast approaching. The money raised that evening directly supports scholarships, music together, art, theatre, and Spanish.

In order for this to be a successful event, we need silent and/or live auction items and sponsors. We are asking for your help in collecting as many items as possible! Donation and sponsor forms are located in the school hallway. If you would like us to email them to you, we are happy to do so any time. Feel free to email

Calendar

**Monday, April 24th:** Late Day Art Program at Pam Benjamin's

**Thursday, April 27th:** Spring Social at Farm Neck Cafe, Oak Bluffs

**Monday, May 1st:** Monday, May 1st begins Teacher Appreciation Week

**Thursday, May 11th:** Grand-Friends Visiting Day
Thursday, May 11th: Noon
Dismissal for Parent-Teacher Conferences

Friday, May 12th: Noon
Dismissal for Parent-Teacher Conferences

Saturday, May 13th: Big Night Out, The Lighthouse Grill, Harbor View Hotel, Edgartown

Friday, May 26th: Fun Friday, Camp Jabborwocky

Monday, June 12th: First Peas to the Table Contest

Thursday, June 15th: Last Day of School / Field Day

Friday, June 16th: 10:00 a.m. Graduation Ceremony, the Tabernacle at MV Camp Meeting Association

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**Chess Volunteers Needed**

We are looking for a few parent volunteers for chess, which takes place on Tuesdays at 2:50pm. If you can help, please contact Emily at admin@vineyardmontessori.com.

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**Primary 1 Classroom**

- **Miss Ty, Miss Cristina**

Special Visitors Day last week was extremely well-attended. It is one of my favorite days of the year: I loved watching what each child chose to show his or her parent. The children were so proud of their work and excited to share “their place” with mom or dad. As the children spend so much of their waking time here at school, it is great to have you observe them “in their element”! Thank you all for coming and making this special day for your child.

It felt very special this week as the warm weather arrived. On Wednesday, I was able to open the classroom door in the morning and let fresh air in. This also enabled me to open the ever-popular exercise of “hammering”. The stumps have remained out on our little deck all winter, but now the children can again hammer two nails into the wood. They are so happy!
Two new puzzles have made their way onto our geography shelf. One is a large, round abstract map of the world surrounded by flags of the nations. This puzzle has a control and can be reconstructed by carefully matching the flags and finding out where they go. The other is a “map” of the solar system, and we do not have a control for it. Some of the older children are able to figure out where the pieces go and carefully arrange them to construct a stylized picture of the solar system as viewed from the Earth’s moon. Puzzles provide opportunities for developing fine motor skills, which are required with the small, specialized movements of locating and placing the pieces. These skills are necessary for handwriting and other important achievements. Other benefits of puzzles are problem solving, planning, shape recognition, and memory enhancement.

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**Primary 2 Classroom**

*Miss Chris and Miss Holly*

Spring is finally here! I have been able to open up our outdoor porch area to allow the children to go outside and use some activities on our porch. Hammering nails into a tree stump is one of the new lessons along with the sensory table and the trampoline. Adding some gross motor activities allows the children to be able to move their bodies in a productive way, which allows them to further focus and concentrate on their individual lessons.

The children have begun discovering that there are many different types of insects out and about on the playground. We have been using the bug catcher to collect the polyh and other flying insects. After the vacation break, we will be making our own bug catchers and insect hotels to hang on the trees to attract helpful insects, such as ladybugs. Exploration and research on insects will begin once we return from the vacation week.

The children planted peas out in the garden beds this week. We will be charting their growth over the next several weeks.

I hope everyone has a wonderful and relaxing vacation week. Please remember to re-fill your child’s extra clothes box with appropriate seasonal clothing when you return. Happy spring!
Elementary Classroom  
- Miss Irene and Miss Nora

What a way to start the week! Our heath hen exhibit at the Martha’s Vineyard Museum was a huge success. The students have worked really hard on this project since late fall, and all of their time and hard work was acknowledged and displayed in a professional manner.

The exhibit will be up for a week or two, so please bring any family or friends to see the exhibit. The museum hours are 10:00 to 4:00 daily. The shipwreck exhibit they were setting up while we were there opens Friday night. It is the first major show of the season. Anne encourages all of us to come. She was not only excited for the shipwreck show, but also to share the extensive heath hen study she put together and was funded by a grant she wrote to the Massachusetts Arts Council to fund. Our work was far more in depth and exciting than any of the other schools that participated. In keeping with the Montessori curriculum, we were able to expand the project in a more in-depth way, covering more areas of the curriculum.

Spring has sprung and so have our peas! We alerted Mary from Island Grown. We are excited and have been attending to them diligently.

This week, we started painting our set design for the play, "The QuiltMaker". Joyce has asked the students to make sure all their lines are memorized inside and out. All the fun stuff starts once the lines are learned.

Elementary I students finished up their study of the animal kingdom. They made books of all five parts of the animal kingdom: fish, birds, amphibians, reptiles, and mammals. This was an extension from one of the great Montessori lessons, The Timeline of Life.

In Elementary II, the students are working with the concept of decimals. The aim is to give the child a sensorial introduction to the decimal fraction material, relating it to the fraction circles and the concept of a unit.

We were all excited to hear from Quin Borrella and his family. They sent all the classrooms and teachers gifts from New Zealand. They have settled back into life in New Zealand. Quin is honing his surfing skills. It was a birthday surprise!
Late Day
- Miss Weezie and Miss Cristina

The new plantings around our play yard, besides looking lovely, have provided an opportunity for us to work on curiosity, patience, and awareness of growth in nature. Students have been very respectful of our new landscaping.

The English poet, Christina Rossetti, wrote a wonderful poem about not harming any living thing: "plant or bug or moth on wing". A nature walk with a child helps to remind us that the adventure for them is more about the looking than the walking. Next week might be a good opportunity to take a nature walk with your child. Remember to take a small bag for collecting treasures and maybe a magnifying glass. Our local libraries are always a source of vacation activities.

Have a safe and happy week, and remember that art class will start again on Monday, April 24th.
Recommended Reading

"Montessori Builds Innovators" by Andrew McAfee

"Why Small Schools Work: Good Things Come in Small Packages" by Tim Seldin

"Choosing Montessori for Kindergarten" by Colleen, “Children First, Always.”

"Develop Leaders the Montessori Way" by Ambiga Dhiraj

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.