"Children are human beings to whom respect is due, superior to us by reason of their innocence and of the greater possibilities of their future."
~Maria Montessori

Annual Fund Update

We are pleased to announce that VMS’ Board of Trustees and the School’s faculty and staff have reached 100% participation in this year’s annual fund! We are so grateful that all our teachers and board members thoughtfully show their dedication by supporting the Annual Fund.

We hope you will support us, too! A gift to VMS’s Annual Fund is a powerful statement, and we strive for 100% participation from all of our current families. Your gift, large or small, truly makes a difference! If you have questions or wish to personally discuss your gift, please contact Debbie at headofschool@vineyardmontessori.com or stop by the office. Thank you in advance for your generosity.

Chess Volunteers Needed

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

Save The Dates

On **Friday, April 7th** at 10:00 a.m., all VMS students will be

**Calendar**

**Tuesdays:** Chess from 3:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m. Brahmin, MVRHS
attending a performance by Andrés Vera at the Unitarian Church. During their regular violin lesson time, Rebecca and Andrés will give the students their violin lesson.

Andrés Vera is a soloist and chamber and orchestral musician, who has performed in countless venues throughout the United States, Europe, the Caribbean, and Asia. He performs the classical cello and the baroque cello.

He is the newest member of the Grammy-nominated Quartet San Francisco, a crossover string quartet that excels in multiple styles — from jazz to tango, pop to funk, blues to bluegrass, gypsy swing to big band and beyond. You can follow their tour dates here.

Andrés is a founding member of San Francisco’s acclaimed Cello Street Quartet, with whom he traveled in 2014 to Russia, Kosovo, and Hungary for the U.S. State Department.

On Saturday, April 8th, there will be a collective concert (all schools) at the Old Whaling Church at 4:00 p.m. Some of our Montessori students have been invited to play the "frog" piece that Andrés selected.

On Monday, April 10th, at the MV Museum in Edgartown, from 4:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m., all elementary students from Vineyard Montessori School (ages 5-13) will be presenting Here Today, Gone Tomorrow - Lessons Learned from the Heath Hen.

This exhibit is the culminating project of a 15-week unit that basically uses the heath hen (who became extinct on Martha’s

Chess captain will be here to play chess! The program needs a parent volunteer.

**Tuesday, April 4th:** 2016-2017 Enrollment Contracts are due returned.

**Thursday, April 6th:** Special Visiting Day
Primary 9:30 a.m. - 10:30 a.m.
Elementary I 9:00 a.m. - 10:00 a.m. and
Elementary II 10:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.

**Friday, April 7th:** All VMS students to attend performance by Andrés Vera.
10:00 a.m. at Unitarian Church

**Saturday, April 8th:** Family Yard Day from 9:30 a.m. to Noon

**Saturday, April 8th:** Violin & Cello Concert at 4:00 p.m. at the Old Whaling Church featuring VMS students and all schools.

**Monday, April 10th:** Open House 4:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m. at the Martha's Vineyard Museum, Edgartown featuring the VMS Elementary Health Hen Project.

**Monday, April 10th - Friday, April 21:** School Closed - Spring Vacation

**Monday, April 24th:** School Reopens

**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
Vineyard in 1932) as a poster child to explore complex issues of biodiversity and habitat. Students will share artwork, field journals, maps, and graphs to demonstrate their newly acquired scientific and historic knowledge.

This project was funded by The Massachusetts Cultural Council with collaborators, Biodiversity Works and The Martha's Vineyard Museum.

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

Monday, May 29th: Memorial Day - School Closed

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

Primary 1 Classroom - Miss Ty, Miss Cristina

A new lesson on the shelf is “Animals of the World”. This is a “big work”, as I call it, because it has many sections, many pieces, and it takes a long time of focused activity. Two children can work on it together. Each continent is taken from the puzzle map and placed on its own blue square. The children then identify four animals that come from that continent and place them on the square. Those that are beginning readers or even learning their sounds place printed cards with the names on the animals.... All this culminates in a booklet of the animals and continents.
Here is a quote for you: "The first aim of the prepared environment is, as far as it is possible, to render the growing child independent of the adult." (Maria Montessori. The Secret of Childhood, 1966.) When you enter our classroom, you will notice that the environment is well-ordered and beautiful. From the youngest children to the oldest, they are taught to choose work on their own, to carry their own trays, to wipe up their own spills. Tools and furniture are child-sized, so work can be completed with minimal frustration. Of course, the adults give assistance when necessary, but it is our greatest pleasure to observe a child being totally independent in a difficult and multi-stepped exercise. The prepared environment allows the child freedom to choose his or her own work and to complete that work at his/her own pace. The environment itself guides the child! It is also wonderful to watch an unfortunate spill—often there are several children who rush to help by picking up the many, many beads that are scattered across the floor!

And finally, there was an exciting visit from Monty, my five-year-old Standard Poodle, who wowed the class with paw shakes and sitting quietly and being petted. Monty adored the attention from his many admirers, and the children were calm and easy with him.

Primary 2 Classroom
- Miss Chris and Miss Holly

One of the practical life activities that really stands out in a primary Montessori classroom is the dressing frames. The purpose of the dressing frames is to build concentration, coordination, and control of movement, all the while encouraging children to become more independent as they learn to care for themselves. Being able to dress and undress oneself is one of the major steps to independence. To help children learn how to dress and undress themselves, we provide frames on which all the different kinds of clothes fasteners can be found. It is very difficult to practice buttoning your coat buttons when you are wearing the coat, but if you have a frame with the buttons on the table, you can see the buttonholes, you can practice on the frame, and when you learn to do them on the frame, it is not so difficult to do them on your own coat.

There are several types of dressing frames: zipping, tying, buttoning, lacing, snapping, buckling, and hook and eye. Children as young as three are able to learn how to zip a zipper and button and unbutton buttons. As the child develops more coordination and control of movement, these become easier, and they move on to more challenging frames, such as tying or buckling.
The children created seed tape with Miss Ava this week. The children used small pieces of tissue and added dots of glue to which they placed carrot seeds on top of each dot. We will be taking these tapes out to the garden next week to plant, but the children will need to prepare the garden beds by turning over the soil and removing any left-over vegetation from the winter months.

Elementary Classroom
- Miss Irene and Miss Nora

We are starting to wrap up our HeathHen unit and are getting very excited about our upcoming open house at the MV Museum. Mark your calendars for Monday, April 10th from 4:00 pm – 6:00 pm for this wonderful event.

This week, Elementary II students presented their President reports. They were fantastic in every sense of the word! Mathew made us a GREAT homemade apple pie that was President Jackson's second favorite food. His first was cheese, but apple pie seemed much more appetizing. Carly made gingerbread cookies which were a favorite of Abraham Lincoln. There were dioramas, drawings, and clay portraits. The students out did themselves! They also included old quotes. See if you remember any of these:

"If I were two faced would I bewearing this one?"
"I don't like that man; I need to get to know him better."
"That some achieve great success, is proof to all that others can achieve as well."
"A house divided against itself cannot stand."
   - Abraham Lincoln

"We need to catch up to overtake the Soviet Union in the arms race."
"And so my fellow Americans, ask not what your country can do for you, ask what you can do for your country."
   - John F. Kennedy

"If you want a friend in Washington, get a dog."
"If you can’t convince them, confuse them."
"You do not know anything except the history you do not know."
"If you can’t stand the heat, get out of the kitchen."
Peas, peas, beautiful peas! Mary from Island Grown Schools visited this week, and we prepared the beds, planted the seeds, and added various, creative support systems for the pea vines to grow on. Now, we just wait and see when the first sprig will sprout. Don't worry; we will all let you know!
Late Day

- Miss Weezie and Miss Cristina

This is our last week of Yogamotion with Miss Anne. We are grateful for her introduction to mindfulness and the practice of yoga with our students and staff.

Our afternoon and Late Day students have continued discussions and activities about feelings and facial expressions. Recognizing and practicing non-verbal expressions is an essential part of developing emotional intelligence and empathy. We have observed how students are becoming more attuned to their own and others' emotions, which is a crucial skill for their future personal and professional growth.
cues can be an asset to social and emotional competence. Nancy Carlsson-Paige, author and early childhood expert, writes that "play is the primary engine of all human growth."

We can help children to develop skills of self-regulation, original thinking, problem-solving, and making sense of their own experience to feel safe. We read several new books this week about "Feelings", "Smiles". The students continue to enjoy the book, "The Lion King".

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
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.

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