“I never teach my pupils, I only give the conditions in which they can learn.”
~ Albert Einstein

Tomorrow Night is the Big Night Out

The BNO Team has been working together to make an evening not to forget.

Each year, the Big Night Out raises money for scholarships, programming, such as music together, Spanish, string, art class, ice skating, theatre, etc. The event directly benefits each and every child enrolled at VMS.

We need your help! There are a few spots left to support the evening: set up, Silent Auction, Live Auction, and evening break down. Any time you are able to give is greatly appreciated.

Calendar

**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

Primary 1 Classroom
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- Miss Ty, Miss Cristina

I am thrilled about our recent project for the auction. We had a guest helper for this: Last Wednesday and Thursday, my friend Valentine Estabrook, a local artist, came to the class to help the children with a water color for the upcoming auction. Her patience and enthusiasm were wonderful to witness, and the children responded in kind as they each created their own "masterpiece". I hope you enjoy seeing (and buying!) these wonderful creations at our Big Night Out!

We are so happy to be hosting five growing, squirming caterpillars. They arrived with all the food and moisture they will need to grow into painted lady butterflies. The children have been so excited about them, and all have shown great control about "looking only with their eyes". Already they have begun to spin some webbing, which in their natural habitat helps to stick them to their host plants. We will watch them shed exoskeletons and grow up to 10 times their original size. We will keep you informed about their progress from caterpillars to chrysalides to butterflies!

It has been wonderful speaking to all my families at parent-teacher conferences. Parent-teacher conferences give us all an opportunity to increase communication between school and home. Hopefully, parents came away a bit more informed about their child's progress and development. I was happy to gain more insight into each one's personality, character, and way of meeting the world. Thank you all!

Primary 2 Classroom
- Miss Chris, Miss Holly, and Miss Rebecca

The children have created some beautiful pieces of art work that will be framed and on sale at the Big Night Out this Saturday night. All parents are invited to attend this fabulous evening that includes a silent and live auction, food, drinks, dancing, and more. I hope to see everyone there!

The children harvested the garlic that has been growing all winter long in our
outside garden bed. Eventhough it was a bit early to harvest, we had some beautiful garlic bulbs that were available to take home along with a recipe for a salad dressing. We need more room in the garden beds to plant our carrot seed tape. The peas are coming along nicely, along with the lemon lettuce; that is if we can keep the children from picking pieces to eat during playground time. They are so delicious!

I have been observing many creative works going on in the class these days. Many of the lessons that the children have been working on all year are now being used in different ways. The children are discovering that they can take what they have learned and add their own twist, making the level of difficulty more challenging. Many children are now giving lessons to other children, which gives the children a sense of pride and accomplishment. It is wonderful to see how the three-year age span works for all the children, either by becoming masters of the lessons or by seeking help from the older group. All children benefit from having a mixed-age group in a Montessori classroom.

Elementary Classroom
- Miss Irene and Miss Nora

The Elementary II students enjoyed mixing up our literature circle this week. Instead of filling out role sheets and sharing, the students broke out into groups and chose passages of events in the book to act out for each other. Onlookers had to guess the chapter and scene that was being acted out.

We included our new fall student, Ben Saunders, in a fun activity this Tuesday. This lesson was shared by an instructor during my final seminar this past weekend to complete my grades 9-12 training. The activity is used to introduce history at the beginning of the year or to outline the processes that a historian goes through in order to piece together historical events. Students are told that Billy Rutherford of Denver, Co was last seen on the night of Jan. 28, 2014 leaving his girlfriend’s house. He has not been heard from since. He was seventeen years old at the time of his disappearance. If still alive, Billy would now be twenty years old. Afterwards, we made a list of facts and then a list of theories. During the activity, I handed out pieces of evidence every 10 minutes...
or so, and kids worked in groups of two to try to solve the mystery. By the time they received their last piece of evidence, the students made the connection that historians and authors make by gathering information of all types, developing theories, interviewing people, and making changes to theories with new evidence. Individually, they wrote a one-page summary of the story explaining what became of Billy Rutherford. It was very entertaining!

This week the Elementary I students continued their botany studies and the classifications of leaves and their shapes. We went out to the school yard and chose different leaves to identify. We brought them in and classified their shapes and identified the plants. In addition, this week we began our study of the Solar System. We had an impressionistic lesson on the relative size of the planets. On the playground we laid out a 12' diameter sun. Next we laid out the planets. The students were able to visualize the size of each planet in relation to the sun. The planets ranged in size from 1/2" in diameter for Mercury, 14 7/8" for Jupiter and 7/16" for Pluto. We discussed the controversy over the classification of a Pluto as planet or moon.

Our Big Night Out projects are finished and awaiting bids on Saturday night!

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**Late Day**

- *Miss Weezie and Miss Cristina*

The weather has not really felt like the middle of May, however, the students have enjoyed many outdoor activities that celebrate this season. They have used colored chalk, painted our fences (with water), and tried "Romper Stompers" (a fun way to improve balance, coordination, and gross motor skills).

Afternoon students have used colored strips to create paperchains, bridges, and collages mounted on black paper. Many students who stay for after-school snack have already eaten everything in their lunch boxes at noontime, so you might want to pack an extra piece of fruit or additional snack for these hungry, growing bodies.

Art class this week included opportunities to choose, trace, color, and then embellish pre-cut face patterns. Some children chose animals or birds while others preferred human faces. Each one was a unique creation! Favorite books this week: "Mother's Day Mice", "The Special Present", and a new edition of "Where's Waldo."
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