VMS Weekly News - September 22, 2017

"Establishing lasting peace is the work of education..."

-Maria Montessori

Calendar

**Wednesday, October 4th:** Admissions Open House at 7:00 p.m.

**Thursday, October 5th:** SING, Outside Movie Night, VMS Main Campus at 6:30 p.m.

**Friday, October 6th:** Professional Development Day -- School Closed

**Monday, October 9th:** Columbus Day -- School Closed

**Thursday, October 12th:** Admissions Open House at 7:00 p.m.

**Tuesday, October 17th:** Admissions Open House at 7:00 p.m.

**Saturday, October 21st:** Truckin MV' MVRHS from 11:00 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.

**Thursday, October 26th:** Parent-Teacher Conferences-- Noon Dismissal

**Friday, October 27th:** Parent-Teacher Conferences-- Noon Dismissal

VMS to Host Admissions Open Houses in October -- Invite Your Friends

VMS will host three admissions open houses in October. Please help us spread the word to families of preschool children through middle school students to join us on Wednesday, October 4th, Thursday, October 12th, or Tuesday, October 17th at 7:00 p.m. each of these evenings. Families are invited to attend an open
Primary 1 Classroom
-Miss Cristina and Miss Rebecca

The students are getting adapted to their routine very easily. They seem to enjoy every new lesson, but they like the sandpaper letters the most. The sandpaper letter is an activity where the students trace over a letter with their index finger and say the sound of the letter. Afterwards, they get to open a little box with objects that start with that letter. For example, if they get the letter s, then the box contains small objects like a screw driver, sleeper, skate, sombrero (hat in Spanish), straw...

In the afternoon, I really enjoy working with Miss Chris and the older students. They are full of enthusiasm when they get a new challenging lesson, and the older students feel so proud of themselves when they find out how to read a word book from our reading drawers or when they finish with their addition equations worksheet.

Today we introduced Snack Preparation to the students and they were able to make their own orange juice.

We have not been able to open the outdoor space for the last few days, which is sad because they miss doing the hammering lesson and drawing the sunflower that doesn't stop blooming! I have never seen a sunflower like that! Make sure you look at it in our garden, which is next to the parking lot.

Yesterday was World Peace Day. We have been reading books about peace and practicing a song. Children love to talk about peace, and some of them even understand that peace should happen every day and not just on one day.
This week, during our morning group lessons, I introduced the class to some of the sandpaper letters. The letters are grouped together, not in alphabetical order, but in groups that can be used to blend together into three-letter words. The first grouping is a, s, m, t, c, and p. In a Montessori classroom, the children work with the sandpaper letters to learn the sound each letter makes, not necessarily the name of each letter. That will come later. After tracing the letter and saying the sound the letter makes, I brought out objects that started with each sound. The children had to decide which object went with each sound. We also found different objects around the classroom that began with those sounds. The children really enjoyed this lesson and are continuing to practice this work over and over again.

Hurricane Jose put a damper on our outside playtime this week but luckily we got to do some movement activities inside instead. The children used rhythm sticks, colorful scarves, egg shakers, and stuffed animals to dance, sing, and move their bodies to music. It was a great way to get some of our energy out!

World Peace Day was on Thursday, and to honor the day, the children created a poster of the world with their hand prints circling the earth. They learned a beautiful song called, "Light a Candle for Peace", and we gathered together in a circle and lit a candle and sang the song as a group. I read many books about peace this week, such as "Our Peaceful Classroom", "If Peace is....", and "The Peace Book". We talked about what it means to be peaceful.

We also played the Silence game where everyone closes their eyes and remains silent for a minute. When the minute is over, each child has an opportunity to share what they heard. By being peaceful, some of the outside noises could be heard or maybe even ones from the other parts of the school. This is always a fun game to play.
Elementary I Classroom
- Miss Nora

This week, the Elementary I students were presented the first great lesson of the Montessori elementary curriculum, The Story of Creation. This is a segue into the evolution of all matter. We did science experiments illustrating solids, liquids, and gases, laws of gravity, laws of attraction, solids turning to liquids, and liquids turning to solids.

We are now studying creation stories from around the world, including Native American, Norse Mythology, and Greek Mythology. All of the students thoroughly enjoy the stories. Emery, in particular, took an interest in "Loo-Wit, the Fire-Keeper" story (Nisqually-Pacific Northwest). At the end of the story, two fighting brothers are turned into mountains. One is now known as Mt. Adams and the other as Mt. Hood. Loo-Wit kept fire in her belly so she was turned into Mt. St. Helens. As the story goes, "If we human beings do not treat the land with respect, the people said, Loo-Wit will wake up and let us know how unhappy she and the Creator have become again. So they said long before the day in the 1980's when Mt. St. Helens woke again."

Elementary II Classroom
- Marysol Jurczyk

This week, there were many independent and group works.

On Friday, Mary Sage came from Island Grown to
do an experiment with soil. We took some soil out of different places around the campus. She brought three Mason jars that we filled with dirt from three areas. We added water to the jars and shook the jars. We labeled the tops of the jars with the names of the places where we found the soil. She asked us to let the jars sit in a shady spot and observe them. We also talked about what is in our gardens and whether we would like to plant a flower or vegetable garden. We decided to plant vegetables. On Monday, we looked at the jars and saw that the soil was layered. Each jar was different. The darkest soil from our prepared bed had roots coming out of it. The soil from the sandy area in the Mason jar showed that all the sand sank to the bottom and a small amount of soil was on top. She wanted us to learn that we should test soil before we start planting.

During our first Spanish class, we reviewed some material with Cristina and sat on the patio during class. We counted to 100, talked about our summers, sang a song about body parts, and did some conversational Spanish with each other.

During history, we had a lesson on the Fertile Crescent. We learned why it was called that and why people lived there. All the animals went there for the water of the rivers. After that, we laid out the timeline of ancient civilizations. We learned about the Sumerians by working with partners and researching about them. I researched the soil and the climate with Connor and found the soil was rich and nice for planting. The climate was hot but it rarely rained. The temperatures averaged between 70-85°F.

Don't forget to come and see us during the Harvest Festival at the Ag Hall this Saturday. We will be working for Cape Light presenting energy experiments from 11:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.
Monty is a Standard Poodle who knows how to relax in casual situations. He is peaceful when awake or asleep. He can lie down in many environments. This allows him to be versatile. Monty is also an experienced sleeper. He can go to sleep in the middle of a loud classroom, with the fan blowing on him.

Monty can be patient when it comes to the guinea pig or other animals. He can also patiently wait for food like a civilized dog would. He is always open to pats on the back or belly. Scratching behind the ear is always appreciated. He is friendly to all and can be trimmed at the dog salon with ease (I assume!).

When he goes outside, fetching a ball is #1. Hiking in the woods is fun for him, too. Monty is a very good dog with a great personality.

Are dogs in the classroom a good idea? I feel that, with certain caveats, a dog can be a wonderful addition to a class of older elementary or middle school students. Having an animal in the midst calms kids and teaches them responsibility.

However, it needs to be the right kind of dog! The main attribute needs to be its calmness. It needs to be quiet most of the time, and not needy. It needs to stay
calm outside of the classroom, too, on leash or off. The dog should be happy to accept a lot of “hands” on it. It should be able to be left on its own, when necessary, if the class needs to go out somewhere where the dog can’t go. And it is best if the dog is hypoallergenic, so no allergens can bother the students.

The dog needs to be a positive addition to the class. All in all, I feel Monty is that special dog, and we are all enjoying him in the classroom a few days a week.

The Late Day Program
- Ms. Weezie

I am pleased to observe how students from Elementary and both Primary classes cooperate in the spirit of our Late Day Program. Children have the opportunity to make new friends and find commonalities in members of our school community. Each classroom has been preparing for celebrating World Peace Day. The Late Day students helped to decorate a "peace sign" poster with small shells gathered from Vineyard beaches. We read excerpts from a book entitled, "Peace in Pieces", and discovered that when we say the word “peace”, our lips form a smile. Other books the students enjoyed this week include: "The Invisible String", "Stormy Weather", and "Alexander and the Magic Boat". Keep reading with your child and remember: There is no app to replace your lap!
Recommended Reading
"There's No Such Thing as the Real World" by Peter Piche in MontessoriParent
Read article here.

Book Corner for Parents
"Yardsticks: Children in the Classroom Ages 4-14" by Chip Wood
"The Six Stages of Parenthood" by Ellen Galinsky

Book Corner for Children
"What Do You Do With An Idea?" by Kobi Yamada

VMS Wish List
Magnetic Blocks