Information

◊ Banking is every Thursday.

◊ Please find attached the minutes from our September 29th PTO meeting.

◊ If you are interested in joining the Truckin’ MV Subcommittee, where you can work behind the scenes to help make this event a huge community success, please email Kim D’Arcy at kimmydarcy@gmail.com or Debbie at director@vineyardmontessori.com. We are really excited about November 14th!

◊ Tuesday, October 27th and Thursday, October 29th are Parent Teacher Conference days with a noon dismissal. Please sign up on your classroom door for a conference time that best fits your schedule.

◊ Thursday, November 5th from 9:30 a.m. to 10:30 a.m. is Special Visitor Day.
**Miss Chris and Miss Holly’s class**

Our week was filled with many fun and wonderful moments.

During gardening, Emily helped the children create a tasty cranberry relish. To tie into our fieldtrip next week, Emily decided to have the children cook with cranberries. Each child had a special part in creating this yummy recipe. Some children chopped apples, some added sugar into the food processor, some even got to process the ingredients. Everyone got to try the relish mixed with some plain yogurt. The overall consensus was that it tasted very good. We had our first dance class with Miss Jesse and Miss Danielle. The children had fun creating shapes with their bodies to the beat of drums. They used scarves and colored circles and moved to changing tempos. I know the children are looking forward to having dance again next week. The children have become accustomed to the routine of our music class with Miss Joyce. They are remembering and singing the songs and following the movements. "Pass the instruments" is still everyone’s favorite part of music class. At our morning group, I have been introducing the children to some Autumn themed songs and finger plays. The Frisky Little Squirrel, Once a Little Apple Seed, The Jingle Jangle Scarecrow and All the Leaves are Falling Down are the children's favorites. Maybe they will even sing them at home and they can teach them to you.........

**Miss Ty and Miss Rebecca’s class**

We welcome new student Alex Parr to our class, to round out our population to twenty wonderful children! Alex just turned four years old, and has already settled into the routine of our classroom. He is cheerful and friendly, and many of the "old" students are helping him get comfortable. His parents are Eve Gates and James Parr. Please welcome them if you see any new faces outside at the gate or on the playground!

Last Friday we took a walk to the Vineyard Haven Yacht Club beach. The students had an opportunity to collect shells and stones for a “treasure bag”, and they also explored the many facets of the shoreline. We spoke before we went about the various off-limits places during our visit; things like the docks, and other peoples furniture down on the beach. Unfortunately we had to say no to wading too! But all the children were really respectful of the rules, and we will be sure to try another visit soon. We did find a few things that were really exciting. There was a boat which had washed ashore in the previous week’s wind storm. It was quite a big sailboat, tipped on its side on the sand. The children enjoyed peering in the windows and imagining what had really happened to the captain and crew! There were also two women with snorkeling gear who were preparing to do a scientific survey of the floor of the harbor to help assess the health of the water’s flora and fauna. The snorkeling gear was really cool, and the women were generous with their time as they talked to the children about it.
**Elementary**

Cristina is moving right along with French lessons with our students. They have been practicing phrases with each other and this past week reviewed introductions. She asks them, "Commet ca va?" They respond, "Tres bien, merci. Et toi?" She is teaching them to use definite articles such as, la maison (the house), la genou (the knee), le livre (the book), le parc (the park). The students are enjoying the exposure to French and a trilingual speaker. She converses with Danny, Tomas and Marysol in Spanish as well!

These past few weeks students have been creating pieces for Writer's Workshop in class. So far, they have written fictional character sketches, about their favorite hide-ways, and about real or imagined dreams. With each piece they are given a diagram or web to help them brainstorm and organize their thoughts. Afterwards they are given a set amount of time to write. There is always a required use of descriptive words, correct grammar, spelling, punctuation, indenting, beginning-middle-end of story and of course their best cursive or manuscript handwriting. When the student completes their writing I meet individually to edit and re-write. To give their audience a deeper understanding of their writing, the students adds illustrations. This is followed by sharing with their peers and displaying them in the hallway for parents and friends. We're amazed by their creativity and eagerness to write!

**Afternoon Program & Late Day**

Children who spend the afternoon with Miss Holly and me are encouraged to rest quietly on their mats. We dim the lights and play soft classical music. As expected, some children sleep soundly for an extended naptime and others rest for approximately a half an hour. Students are then free to choose from puzzles, books and Practical Life shelves. We offer activities prepared for children to explore tactile experiences and compare (for ex. Floam vs. Modeling Clay). Seasonally, we prepare simple lessons using natural ingredients as leaves, apples or pumpkin seeds to sort, arrange or glue. We observe repetition as children become more involved.

Late Day children will be starting Art Class with Pam Benjamin on Monday. We look forward to this unique opportunity for our students.

Books this week included: *Where the Wild Things Are*, *Henry The Dog With No Tail*, *Big Al* and *Mean Soup*. 
Montessori Moment presented by Ty:
Sand Paper Letters: Letters of the alphabet are broken up into smaller sets of about 6 letters per set. Children learn the sounds of each letter one at a time. For example “mmmmmm”. They begin with the Red set and progress to the other sets from there. Each letter has an accompanying box of objects that with begin with the same letter. After going through each object the student is encouraged tell a story about one of the objects. Once they have completed each letter in the set they move on to matching objects from the matching box. The next step incorporates the Moveable Alphabet. Children use a container of objects from the same letter set and match a letter from the Moveable Alphabet to each of the objects. Children complete one set of letters before moving on to a new set. This is the beginning of reading.

Approval of September’s minutes:
The minutes were approved with one addition. The motion was approved to purchase the equipment at a cost of up to $3,000.00.

Director’s Report: (Please see attached for complete details)

Check box: There will be a box for parents to leave checks outside of Debbie’s office.

Fundraising Updates:

Truckin MV will take place November 14th 11:00am to 1:30. The next meeting is 8:30 AM Wednesday October 21, 2015. VMS needs volunteers for the event. There will be sign-up sheets placed in the hallway to volunteer to help on the day of the event. More trucks/vehicles needed: Debbie will email “trucker forms” for everyone to see which companies have already agreed to participate. Parents can help by contacting a potential truck owner/ volunteer. T-Shirts will be made this year for the event.

Fall Pie Sale: We will consider finding a new source for the pies or postpone the fundraiser for a future time.

Spring Fundraiser: PTO discussed the possibility of focusing on one singular event rather than two as well as the potential of having both events and doing them on different days.

Evening event: Discussed moving the date for the evening event to the winter possibly February or March. Ideas discussed:
  - Family Dance Party: Dance O’ Rama: Location to explore: Loft
  - Family Bowling Night at the bowling alley.
  - Other locations: Grange Hall or Flatbread

Day Event: To be discussed next PTO meeting

Treasurers report:
$20, 849.15 in the PTO bank account.
September’s Flatbread Fundraiser raised: $542.00

October expenses:

Request for funds:
  - Request made for table for Miss Ty’s class $209. All Approved.
  - Scholarship funds $2503. from 2014/15 will be moved to the 2015/16 account. All approved.

Room parents needed
Parents needed for: field trips, to help assist on special days, help organize events, teacher appreciation day, meals for families in need, etc. Nicole will send out a full description of what a Room Parent is. Please find attached a description of the Room Parent’s responsibilities.

Transportation for winter skating program will be needed. PTO discussed getting a school bus rather than having parents drive.

VMS yard clean up.
Fall clean up will be postponed until the spring. We will try to organize a Fun-Friday that incorporates yard clean up in November.

Jennifer LoRusso
Jennifer@chilmarkgeneralstore.com
Flatbread Pizza Benefit Night
I received the check from Flatbread Martha’s Vineyard Inc. in the amount of $542.00 for our benefit night.

Evacuation Drills
VMS held its first evacuation drill on October 6th at 10:15 a.m. The drill was very successful with everyone leaving the building and walking to the Main Street end of the playground. We were able to get all children out and take attendance within 4 minutes. That is great timing for the first one. The next drill is scheduled for Thursday, November 19th. The Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care (EEC) require that drills be conducted on a monthly basis, different days, different times and that the teacher’s guide the children out different egresses.

Professional Development Day
On October 9th we held our first of two professional developments for the school year. The afternoon began with a staff meeting followed by an in-service on nutrition with information provided by the USDA Food and Nutrition Center and an in-service on Mandated Reporting with information provided by the Mass. Department of Children and Families. Both of these in-services are annual requirements.

Parent Teacher Conferences
Tuesday, October 27th and Thursday, October 29th VMS will hold its Parent Teacher Conferences. These are also required by the Mass Dept. of Education as well as EEC. The teachers work very hard in preparing the individual child documentation for the conference.

The information in the conference is collected from the lead teachers own assessment tool. The tool collects information based on observations made in the classroom and from lessons given.

In the Montessori classroom the child must be completely unaware and unencumbered by this assessment tool. This tool is only to support scaffolding the child’s learning in specific areas and develop strategies for meeting the child’s learning needs.

Immunization Reports
The Massachusetts Department of Public Health report must be submitted by October 30th. If you have any updated immunization information to get to me please do so within the next few days.

Annual Surveys
In the month of November I will be sending out the Annual Survey through Survey Monkey. I found last year that this was the fastest and easiest way to collect information from families. We value everyone’s response and use the information to continually develop and improve upon our programming.

Scholarship Program
VMS has two scholarship programs. One program is funded by the PTO using 25% of the net income raised from the previous year fundraising efforts. The application for this funding goes out in November and is distributed in December. Any family is welcome to apply. The second scholarship program is for students entering kindergarten through elementary. The application is distributed in February and funds are distributed to your August 1st payment for the next school year. This program is funded from a separate funding source set up by alumni of the school.

VMS Weekly News
The VMS Weekly News is distributed every Friday by email. If you would prefer a paper copy I am happy to print one for you. There is a great deal of valuable information in the VMS Weekly News and I hope that you stay connected to the amazing work going on in your child’s classroom and throughout the whole school.
Room Parents

The role of a room parent is to assist the teacher in organizing and promoting class and school events throughout the year. Room parents help organize volunteers for social events, field trips, Meals for Moms, or whenever extra help is needed in the classroom. The president of the PTO and/or the lead teacher will assist by providing timely information and support to the room parent.

What are the Expectations of a Room Parent?

- Work well with teachers, students and parents.
- Be willing to take direction, but work independently as needed.
- Be organized and willing to organize others.
- Communicate well with families through telephone, email, etc.
- Be an enthusiastic and positive support for the classroom.
- Maintain confidentiality of all families and teachers.

What does a Room Parent Do?

- Provides and schedules volunteers for teacher directed activities and dates.
- Organizes support network for classroom families (i.e. dinners for families with a new baby, flowers when there is a loss/surgery, etc.).
- Coordinate Teacher Acknowledgement (holiday gifts, end of year present, teacher appreciation week, etc.)
- Assist the classroom teachers with surveys and/or other information gathering from the community/families.