Happenings around the VMS campus—

The teachers and I are always honored when Montessori teachers take time from their visit to Martha’s Vineyard to stop at VMS. We are especially excited that Jackie Debas, AMI Directess at Old Colony Montessori in Hingham, will be visiting us on Monday morning. Jackie was a primary teacher at VMS from 1985–1990 and continues to have close relationships with her students from those years.

Our website has been under construction for too long! I am currently working with a website designer and photographer to have it up and active again. There are pictures being taken of the school, the classrooms, the children at work and the faculty. We are really excited and looking forward to the website being up and running before the end of the year.

MVTV is doing a segment on VMS and we are thrilled to be able to tell our story! A day at the Vineyard Montessori School will be televised in January.

The new climbing structure has arrived and we need some help getting the cement footings in the ground and building the structure. If you are available to help please send Debbie an email or stop in the office.

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INFORMATION

◊ Banking is every Thursday.

◊ The next PTO meeting is Tuesday, December 15th from 6:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. Child watch will be available.

◊ VMS Elementary Classroom Bake sale Saturday, December 19th from 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m., next to the Movie Theater on Main Street in Vineyard Haven.

◊ Winter Gathering is Wednesday, December 23rd at 11:00 a.m. Please join your child’s classroom for songs and refreshments. Dismissal is at noon.

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Bring Montessori materials into your Home

For Small Hands

http://www.ForSmallHands.com

Delight young children with real tools that let them handle real tasks "all by myself!"

This company provides hard-to-find, child-size items that allow your child to pour their own juice or rake leaves by your side, doing purposeful "work" that supports self-confidence and independence.

Also, Vineyard Montessori receives a percentage of sales towards purchasing materials when you use our customer number 121346 at checkout!

Please pick up a catalog in the office!
“Maria Montessori gave children the greatest gift- she gave them the universe! She felt that no creature in our vast universe was too small to explore. Nor was dirt something to be discarded. She encouraged free exploration of the natural world to entice the senses and encourage learning.”

Our class had the opportunity to combine two activities, leaf raking and parachute play, to create a wonderfully collaborative experience. After raking the leaves into a giant pile, the children grabbed handfuls of leaves and put them on top of the parachute. Together they held the parachute and sang "Ring Around the Rosie" but changed the words from "ashes, ashes we all fall down" to "popcorn, popcorn, it pops so high"! The leaves would then "pop" from the parachute, raining down on the children. It was so enjoyable to watch each child take part and work together as a group.

Miss Emily continued the work with wool this week. She brought in the wool that the children cleaned last week and each child was allowed to choose a color that they wanted to dye their wool with. By adding vinegar and food coloring into a baggie, the children then pressed the color into their wool. Emily showed them different articles of clothing that are made from wool: mittens, a sweater, a hat, some dyed in different colors.

We will be looking for someone to care for Nutmeg, our class guinea pig, over the winter break. If you are interested in caring for our pet, please let us know as soon as possible.

This week we had a wonderful morning with Nancy Blank, a local artist and the grandmother of Ava and Elise Laird. She brought pre-made clay squares for each of the children to carve pictures and designs into. Working with a small group of children at a time, she guided them to fill their squares and to make a design around the edge for a border. Because she works at Featherstone, she has access to a kiln, and this week she will fire the squares. We look forward to her coming back next week for the children to paint their masterpieces. The finished, glazed products will be ready the week before the winter holiday break.

Thank you, Nancy, for your time, expertise, and for all the materials.

In our classroom, on the art shelf, we have **scissoring** as a choice of activity. At the beginning of the year the children were using scissors on a blank piece of paper; learning to put the proper pressure on the blades, making small snips. As the year progressed we placed other strips of paper as options to cut. Some had straight lines, some had diagonal lines, some had large zig-zag designs, and some had wavy lines. Well, several of the children’s hands grew stronger and they became more adept at this activity, so this week a new paper was added for them to try: the spiral! This is a very hard exercise and takes a lot of concentration.
Late Day with Miss Weezie and Miss Cristina

I would like to sincerely thank those who helped us assemble our new wheelbarrows for the playground. Helpers included: Miss Cristina, Carlos Osborne, James and Angie Moffatt and Tracy Smith. The wheelbarrows have already become a sought-after piece of equipment. The children use them individually and with groups of friends. Equipment of this type provides opportunities for children to engage in "work projects" which inspire them mentally and physically. We observed and overheard language used to negotiate "jobs" for collecting, filling, sharing and moving from place to place. This allows students to take on roles of leader and participant, both key in developing healthy social skills. This is the type of play that we encourage and support.

Books we read this week: Let's Build a Clubhouse, Baking Day at Grandma's, The Growing Story, and Space Boy.

Weezie and Cristina
Wish List 2015

During the holiday season families say “thank you” to teachers in many different ways. As you may know teachers often spend their own money on classroom materials and supplies to create a rich learning environment for your child(ren).

If you are already considering “what to get your child’s teacher?” The Wish List is a great option. NO amount is too little. Every bit helps.

You can give in two (2) different ways: 1. Make a donation to your classroom wish fund, in an anonymous amount. The teachers will order what they like from the funds. 2. You can order a lesson and/or item from the list below or ask Debbie for help.

Thank you, VMS PTO

TY and Rebecca’s Classroom
Map pieces of continents – (10) $9.00 each
Knobs for maps – (2) $21.50 each
Glass polishing tablet - $3.50
Pattern play puzzle - $34.95
Early story starters - $9.95
Butterfly garden - $21.95
Hand drill - $20.95
Mineral & Rock Science (2) $10.95
Bracket for bird feeder $35.00
Golden Guide Books $6.95 each
Flag stamps of the world $220.00
Verb action cards $8.00

Chris and Holly’s Classroom
Constructive triangle boxes - $150.00
Geometric solids - $60.00
Small moveable alphabets – (2) $42.00 each
Large decimal pocket chart - $20.00
Small decimal pocket chart - $16.50
Decanomial bead box - $85.00
Multiplication board - $16.00
Flag stand of North and South America $170.00
Golden Guide Books - (5) $6.95 each
Trampoline for 1 child - $90.00

Irene and Cristina’s classroom
Moveable periodic table of elements $149.00
Algebraic Binomial Cube $19.40
Arithmetic Trinomial Cube $36.65
Subtraction Snake Game $44.00
Set of books for our Literature Circle
Sign of the Beaver approximately $8.00 per book or 64.00 for 8
Give Me Liberty: The Story of the Declaration of Independence
Approximately $6.00 per book or 48.00 for all 8
Parents are welcome to gift individual books above

Weezie and Cristina Late Day Program
Outlast Block Set $6,600
Child & Youth size rake - (4) $15. each
Child & Youth size snow shovels - (4) $15. each
Large paint buckets $5.25