

The Crescent Chronicle

Crescent Montessori School Newsletter

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Welcome to a New School Year

By *Karin Niehoff*

During our annual weekend Workfest in late August, parents and staff came together to clean, paint, build, move, repair, trim, plant, sort, organize, and tidy the classrooms and the playground for the new school year. Every year I witness the activity of parents giving their time and energy to the children of our school. As we settle into the comfortable routine of the sixth week let us say thank you for helping to make Crescent Montessori School the best!

The CMS Mixer on September 24th was an opportunity to show appreciation for parents. The evening couldn't have been lovelier. The music, the food, the setting and the perfect weather, not to mention the company, gave the staff and the social committee a chance to give back to the parents at CMS. Your participation continues to support the daily life of the school. We are drawn together by the single thread of wanting the best for the children and students of CMS. Thank you!

The Upper Branch is the name of our school resource room on the second floor. Over the past five years we have focused on expanding classroom space and adding

office space. This year's growth created a place for everyone at the school.

Room 210 houses our library and music room as well as a place for parents and staff to meet. The room has the feel of a tree house, right up there in the branches; a metaphor for CMS because this is where growth occurs in a tree at the level of branches. Room 210 gives our students an opportunity to incorporate library time in their school day. Older students can visit the library in that ever-expanding circle of independence. The resource room gives us a place for music and movement. The sessions are scheduled weekly for all classes on a rotating basis. Additional potential for this wonderful space includes art classes, parent toddler gatherings, and informal parent/teacher meetings. We will work on developing a schedule for activities over the next few weeks as we try out pilot programs as a resource for the whole school community.



CALENDAR

October/November:

Friday, October 30 Halloween Harvest Fair, 8:30 to 11:00

Thursday/Friday, November 5th & 6th Conferences, No Class Scheduled

Friday, November 13th Conference Make-up; Minimum day, 11:30 departure, all students

Friday, November 20th Parent Social CMS Mixer, 6:30pm to 8:30pm

Wednesday-Friday, November 25-27 Thanksgiving Holiday Break

Save the Date: December 18 Holiday Tea and Student Performance

SENIOR ELEMENTARY NEWS

by *Karin Niehoff*

“I hear and I forget. I see and I remember. I do and I understand.”

This quote is attributed to the philosopher, Confucius, 5th century B.C. We create the context of history every day in our Senior El classroom and this quote is as practical today as it was 2,500 years ago.

What is unique about a Montessori class, that distinguishes it from traditional classrooms, is that our students continually have the opportunity to “do”. We learn by doing. This aspect of our school is well understood at the Primary level. As children get older however, expectations change as we want to understand school as we knew it; a place to sit and listen and pay attention. Our lucky students have materials for learning about decimals, fractions, computing area and volume, the history of ancient civilizations, chemistry and physics, geography and biology. Learning by doing has a depth that learning by listening can’t capture. Students

can spend the time they need on a given level to ensure they understand. The mixed age group provides the opportunity for peer teaching. Teaching another brings learning to an even more profound level of understanding. Active, cooperative, problem-based approaches to learning have repeatedly been shown to equip students with the skills they will need to be valued in the 21st century American job market.

What are the personal attributes Professor Richard Felder of North Carolina State University believes schools must help students develop?

- ◆ a creative and entrepreneurial mind set;
- ◆ a holistic, multi-disciplinary thinker;
- ◆ strong interpersonal skills;
- ◆ language skills and cultural awareness;
- ◆ the ability to be a self-directed learner.



or giving encouraging words to a classmate during fitness class - this group of students shows sincere respect and caring for one another on a daily basis.



The atmosphere is bright, cheerful and the materials are arranged for ease of discovery and functionality. In a Montessori school setting, children are free to work and move about in a prepared environment - the environment needs to be comfortable and inspirational - our classroom is both.

Our lower elementary class felt like a community right away. The work of the students is collaborative and individual. Students progress at their own pace. There is cooperation rather than competition between the ages and personalities. I have witnessed peer support and goodwill among all of the students. Whether it is lending a helping hand to another student with a new activity,

JUNIOR ELEMENTARY NEWS continued...

As we come together at circle time each day and exchange our multi-language “good mornings”, the sense of community is obvious. Often, the children have their arms around one another and sway to the words of our morning song.

“Good morning dear earth,

good morning dear sun,

good morning dear stones,

and the flowers everyone.

Good morning dear bees and the birds in the trees,

good morning dear friends and good morning to me!”



By *Pam Higi*

As I write, we are enjoying week six of the new school year. The children are busy with their individual and small group activities as well as coming together for stories, songs, poetry and outdoor play. The mixed age group allows the younger children to learn from the older children and being able to show the way. It's quite amazing to see how capable they are and how beautifully they are becoming a classroom community.

A comfortable routine has set in and we are right where we want to be. Your children are busy in the classroom, a place we have created just for them. As teachers, we get to share this wonderful environment as a place to practice the work we love.

Please join me in welcoming Lynn Albrecht to our Primary staff this year. Lynn's thoughtful and caring way has quickly lent itself to a connection with both the children and the staff. Mari Contreras has been with our school for six years. Her loving care of the children is evident in the way the students in each class respond to seeing her and being with her for lunch or class time. Robin Cordano continues to

Miss Lynn brought us a dear September poem:

September Heat

In September when the days are hot,

I like to find a shady spot,

And hardly move a single bit--

and sit--

and sit--

and sit--

and sit! *Anonymous*

Our October poem:

The Fishing Pole

A fishing pole's a curious thing;

It's made of just a stick and a string;

A child at one end with a wish,

And on the other end a fish.

Mary Caroline Davies

share her expertise of music and movement. The children are enjoying their time with her during their weekly class. They are preparing a little something to perform for you at our Harvest Fair.

Here are a few highlights you may have heard about from your children: Our sweet potato vine has grown over the top of the glass jar! We asked, “will it grow”? It is! This is something we as adults may take for granted but to the fresh eyes of a child it is a lesson in the beauty and intelligence of nature.

