



The Heritage Gazette

Heritage Montessori School

9515 Belair Road, Baltimore, MD 21236

Phone: (410)529-0374, Fax: (410)529-8534

Email:office@HeritageMontessoriSchool.com

November 2009



Calendar of Events

November

20 *Pizza Lunch Friday*

24 Harvest Luncheon
11:30am
No class for
Stepping Stones
program
No Aftercare

25-27 No School

December

4 *Pizza Lunch Friday*

11 *Pizza Lunch Friday*

18 Winter Program
10:30am - Early
Childhood program
& Stepping Stones
1:00pm Elementary
No Aftercare

21-1 Winter Break

A Message from the Director

It has been a wonderful start to a new academic year! Our new students have adjusted to their classrooms and it has been a pleasure getting to know their families over the past few months. It was exciting to see the changes that had occurred in our returning students over the summer (several inches for some of them!) and to watch them comfortably return to their familiar classrooms, renew friendships and begin the journey into new work, lessons and challenges. This new school year has also brought us a new staff member, Mrs. Loulya Sattouf, who is assisting in the afternoons in the Elementary 1 classroom, teaching Physical Education and also overseeing the Elementary Aftercare program. We hope you have had the chance to meet Mrs. Sattouf and welcome her to the Heritage family.

There have been several opportunities over the past few months for parents to visit Heritage for Back-To-School Night, Curriculum Night, Parents' Night and Montessori Education Week. We hope you had the chance to participate in these activities to learn more about what happens in your child's classroom each day as well as to continue learning more about the Montessori philosophy and why it works so well!

November has the students preparing for our Harvest Luncheon which will be celebrated on November 24th. All of our classes will be cooking and contributing to this community feast, so we hope that you will be able to plan to take some time out in your day and come celebrate with us.

Since the beginning of this school year I have had the pleasure of being an intern in Mrs. Humera's and Mrs. Smith's classroom during the morning work time. As many of you are aware I am currently in the process of completing the Montessori Early Childhood training for 3 to 6 year olds as a requirement of my role as Director. This time spent in the classroom, however, working with the children and the teachers has felt less like a requirement and more like a gift. There is so much not just to teach the children but to learn from them and I am truly enjoying the lessons they are teaching me! Of greatest importance is, "Help me to do it myself," which as we all know can require a limitless supply of patience. Our students are eager to do it themselves and to revel in their newfound independence, and I am appreciative of the chance to be a part of that experience this school year.

"It is necessary for the teacher to guide the child without letting him feel her presence too much, so that she may always be ready to supply the desired help, but may never be the obstacle between the child and his experience." -Maria Montessori

Melodie Sachs

Stepping Stones News

I just want to start out by saying how wonderful the children are adapting to the new routine. We had some difficult times in separating from parents but all in all, the children are doing well. It's exciting to see their personalities coming out. They are starting to feel more comfortable in their new environment. They are socializing with one another and



figuring their own way to communicate.

In the classroom we are focusing on putting work away, pushing in chairs and unrolling and rolling rugs. They are starting to finish a work cycle – which has a beginning, middle and end. In the Practical Life area we have been getting more water works out. The children love it. Hand washing is a biggy for us because the toddlers need to do this before they have a snack. Individual snack is a popular activity for them.

We are slowly adjusting to the new routine. The toddlers have no concept of time so we are working on taking turns and allowing our other friends to have a snack. Pumpkin washing and vegetable washing have also been favorite activities for the toddlers.

In the Sensorial area the children have been interested in shapes and in the Language area we are matching objects to objects, pictures to objects and picture to pictures. In Math we have been working on one to one correspondence. As you can see we have been very busy these months.

I also want to thank all the parents for the snack donations. They have been very yummy. I want to thank the Givens family for the five gallon fish tank and goldfish. Sarah Harriman's family donated more guppies to the fish tank and one just had 5 babies. The children have enjoyed our new pets immensely. I am looking forward to working with you and your child throughout the year. I can see it is going to be an enjoyable and fantastic year.

Mrs. Beth and Mrs. Renee

Greetings from Mrs. Lawson

Hello Moms, Dads, Aunts, Uncles and Grandparents. It has been a great beginning of school. It has been such a pleasure to see all of you at the Curriculum Night, parent conferences and Parents' Night when your child had the opportunity to be the teacher and show you how to work in a Montessori classroom. There is another great opportunity to be with your child on November 24th for the Harvest Luncheon. The children in our class will be making baked apples and butter for the meal. There will also be soup, cornbread, salad and punch at the luncheon. The last exciting activity of 2009 is the Winter Program on December 18th at 10:30am.

Now that you have heard the ways you can be involved, let me tell you about what



exciting work your children are doing in class. They are working on grace and courtesy. They are learning to pull out chairs, push under chairs, carry materials one at a time, how to carry scissors and how to carry a pencil. The children are also

learning how to use words to communicate their feelings. How to say, "Excuse me," when they bump into someone or how to tell someone that they do not like the way they are being treated. In Geography we have many children working on learning the continents of the world. In Math children are working on recognizing numbers and some are starting to learn about the decimal system. We have a lot of children starting to learn their letter sounds and some who are beginning to read. (One of the most exciting things in teaching is seeing a child learn to read.) In Practical Life the children are starting on food preparation. They will be doing apple slicing and banana cutting. School is an exciting place. If you can find the time you should come and watch the children learning and experiencing life in a Montessori classroom. Observations are always welcome. We look forward to seeing you!

Mrs. Lawson and Mrs. Kim

Hello from Mrs. Humera and Mrs. Smith

Happy Autumn and welcome back everyone! We hope you had a wonderful summer with your children. We were excited to begin a new school year and were looking forward to greeting your children into our classroom.

This year we are fortunate to have Mrs. Melodie Sachs joining us as an intern. She is the director of our school so everyone already knows her well. She has been great and very patient with the children, especially the younger students.



In these first few months the children are learning the routine of a classroom as well as grace and courtesy lessons. First year children

are working on pouring, scooping, squeezing and practicing of hand washing. These activities are very important because they reinforce concentration, sense of order and independence. Returning students have been doing some reviewing so that they can refresh all they learned last year. In Language, the children are working with sand paper letters and movable alphabets, from which they learn their sounds, writing skills and making three letter words.

Our first curriculum meeting in October was very well attended. Parents had the opportunity to learn more about the Math Curriculum; in our class we presented Golden Bead addition and the Teen Board. The Huber's Farm field trip was a lot of fun for both parents and children. On the farm, the children picked pumpkins and vegetables and enjoyed a Hay Ride. We have been discussing different holidays throughout the past months. We have talked about fasting and Eid-ul-Fitr, which is a Muslim holiday. To show how Muslims celebrate Eid, I brought henna and decorated the children's hands, which they enjoyed very much. In addition, I brought dates, which they tasted. We also talked about Yom Kipper (Jewish Holiday) and the Iranian fall festivals. We sang some wonderful peace songs.



We really appreciate Helen Walper's effort, our class representative, who prepared our beautiful bulletin board and organized our volunteer chart and chaperones for the Huber's Farm field trip. We want to say thank you to all our parents who helped our class.

"The best way to help a child learn a skill is to provide a learning environment that helps to develop skill."

The Young Child and the Environment, by Nancy E. Sayre page 33

Mrs. Humera, Mrs. Smith,
Mrs. Yvonne & Mrs. Melodie

Elementary 1 News

Dear Families,

I always find myself starting this first article of the year with stating how fast the first few months go by, and this year is no exception! The children new to the room have learned so much about how things are done now that they feel part of the elementary community. This is a big deal. They have already begun to demonstrate their ability to moderate their voices in order to be respectful of others, and to move their bodies gracefully through the room. They have all arrived back to school eager to work with the materials and there has been great excitement in demonstrating mastery.

It was wonderful to see many of you at our first Curriculum Night and I hope you enjoyed the workshop style introduction to the Stamp Game and the Bead Frame. Montessori mathematics is one of the most distinct differences between what we do, which guides the children to an understanding that no other method does, and traditional methods.

Our first field trip was to the Anita Leight Estuary Center, and what a day we had. The entire elementary community went, split up into groups and participated in four programs designed especially for us. It was filled with great extensions to the knowledge the children already had and we all came away with ideas for new materials and work for the classroom as well as ideas for individual research possibilities.



Our class also had 100% participation in the Trike-a-thon incorporating healthy exercise, caring for others and a lot of fun. The end of the month was marked by our first opportunity of the year to really sit down and talk one on one with you about your child. Remember we are always available to you in a variety of ways, so don't hesitate if you have questions or concerns!

Mrs. Molino, Mrs. Spiker, Mrs. Sattouf

Elementary 2 News

Do you know what kind of animal has three hearts, a backbone that resembles a piece of plastic, and has an ink sac? Well, the Elementary 2 class found out at our trip to the National Aquarium. The squid has three hearts, a plastic-like backbone, and an ink sac. We were fortunate enough to dissect squids at the Aquarium. We were all kind of grossed out by the slimy creature, but in the end, we all had a great time! Thank you to Erik Hartmark (Anders' father) who accompanied us on our trip.

The first couple of weeks of school in the Elementary 2 class were focused on learning the classroom rules and learning the routine of the class. The students were also revisiting works that they completed last year as an opportunity to review. However, we are in full swing with new lessons in all the curriculum areas. The students seem to enjoy the Science Lab that we have every Monday afternoon. They have been learning about matter and the states of matter and have been completing experiments based on that subject.

In Math, students have also been working on squaring binomials, rounding large numbers, estimating, and the fourth year students have been working on mastering the four mathematical operations. In Language, the students have received lessons on different parts of speech including abstract, collective, and proper nouns and limiting adjectives. The

students have also been working on paragraph writing, friendly letters, poetry, and editing skills.

The students are also hard at work learning about the Solar System. Each student is completing a report on the planets. They have found out some really cool information about the solar system and are sharing it with one another. For example, did you know that Uranus has rings, or that scientists believe that the Asteroid Belt was once a planet that exploded into smaller asteroids? The students are becoming quite the experts on the solar system!



Lastly, the students have completed the first of many book reports. Each student completes a written report as well as a project. The students have completed collages as their first project. Every month the students go to the Perry Hall Library to get books for their reports and each month the students read a different genre. So far, they have read horror books. Thank you to the parents who have driven us to the library so far!

In the next Gazette article, I will share with you our first overnight trip to Echo Hill Educational Outdoor School. The entire Elementary 2 class would like to wish everyone a happy and safe holiday season!

Ms. Thomas and Mrs. Clulow

Music Notes

Welcome back to a new year of school. We have already had two school-wide Community Gatherings. At the end of September, Ms. Thomas' Elementary 2 class hosted songs about the planets. The children enjoyed learning the names and facts about each of the planets in our solar system. Most recently the toddlers in Ms. Beth's Stepping Stones class joined everyone in singing and chanting folk songs and rhymes. As the theme for this school year is Colonial America, the Early Childhood classes have also been dancing with scarves, shaking eggs and tapping with rhythm sticks to early American colonial music.

Upstairs, the Elementary 1 class has been busy learning the various families and instruments of the orchestra. We even had an opportunity to have a clarinet in the classroom. We have been studying music notation, learning to clap their rhythms, learning their names and note values, as well as how to create them on paper. The 2nd and 3rd years have also been learning the music staff for the treble clef and playing rhythms on the xylophones. In addition, the 3rd years have been playing simple melodies on the xylophones. The children have also been sharing their private music lessons on piano and guitar with their friends.

The Elementary 2 class is well on their way with their recorders. The 4th years have made a great start with folk songs. As our theme this year is on Colonial America, the 5th years are working hard on some Celtic songs which we hope to present at the Winter Program this December. The beginning of the year also saw a review of the instruments of the orchestra and music notation and rhythm. Between singing songs for our Community Gatherings, we have also learned about Johann Sebastian Bach, a famous composer from the Baroque period of music, and have listened to some of his music. We have also had some great presentations from the children on trumpet, piano and guitar.

The next two months we will be busy in all the classes working towards our Winter Program in December. We all look forward to seeing you there!

Mrs. Hartmark

Physical Education Greetings

Hello Everyone! It has been a pleasure getting to know all of the wonderful students. This year's objective in Physical Education is for students' to attain the skill and knowledge to be physically active as part of a healthy lifestyle through activities specifically designed to allow for gross motor movement. I have already seen great improvement in students' listening skills and coordination skills.

In the Early Childhood classes, the students had the opportunity to tell me a little about themselves.

Students also had the chance to share specific physical activities/games they would like incorporated in the school year. In the



classes, we are focusing on teamwork, listening skills, and following directions as these are all essential in a structured environment. We started off the school year on the importance and benefits of maintaining physical activity.

The Early Childhood class will concentrate on body and space awareness, balancing, directions, rhythm, dancing and cooperative learning. I started the school year working on listening and coordination skills through cooperative activities, games and songs.

The Elementary 1 and Elementary 2 students learned about the three parts of a physical education class; warm-up, activity, and closing activity. The warm-up for the students has been to run a lap. This allows the students to

build stamina, muscle coordination, and strength. By the end of the school year the Elementary classes should be able to run ½ a mile. Students in the Early Childhood classes walk a lap and sometimes I have them skip and listen to music in order for the warm-up to be engaging.

The focus in Elementary 2 has been the importance of teamwork, coordination, throwing and catching. Students have learned the rules in kickball and the similarities between this sport and baseball. Students have enjoyed this activity and Elementary 1 students are excited at the accomplishments they made in their coordination skills.

I am looking forward to a great school year and working with the talented students.

Mrs. Sattouf

Notes from Spanish Class

Dear Parents,

Well Fall is finally here! I hope everyone enjoys these days.

Everyone is doing beautifully. We are working on the sounds of the Spanish alphabet, numbers, greetings, weather, seasons of the year, days of the week, months of the year, and our body parts.

Please help them at home by asking what they learned today in Spanish! Mastering one new word per class adds up quickly.

Maestra Nancy and Mrs. Renee

News from BASC

We have had a wonderful beginning to a brand new school year. The children, parents and teachers appear to have adjusted to the new school year with relative ease. Although the rules for the day are new for some, they are just like an old hat to others. Being able to help another child is paramount in this environment.

The BASC program welcomes you to this new beginning. We hope that your “Summer break” was terrific as well as fun-filled.

BASC---What is that? Well for our new families at Heritage Montessori it's **Before and After School Care**. Our daily schedule begins something like this:

7:30-8:30 Greet children, read, socialize, free play, doing work from the shelves

8:30-8:45 Group rug activity, morning song, morning discussion, quiet time before class.

8:45 Dismissal for the beginning of the academic day

3:00-5:30 Activities from shelf, outside time, snack time, free play and dismissal

All the children are aware of the rules in the classroom. We adhere to these rules as well in order to have a very successful day.

September and October offered the children some new activities. In September we did mirror portraits and introduced the international peace song for peace day. We also did some shadow tracing and vegetable tasting. October found a knitting circle in our class, casting on and counting loops for scarf making, edible pretzel initial making and the ever popular bead designs. We also talked about African American poets.

We truly look forward to the coming months. We enjoy the glimpses the children allow us into their lives.

Mrs. Yvonne and Mrs. Renee

