



# The Heritage Gazette

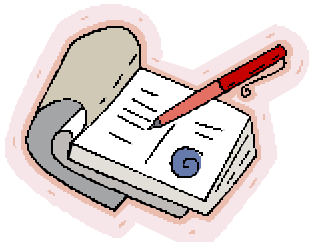
a monthly publication of  
**Heritage Montessori School**

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## A Message from the Headmistress

Our first Curriculum Meeting in October was very well attended. Parents were first given an overview of the Language curriculum, and then had the opportunity of being students while the teachers gave specific lessons. We hope that parents got a first person glimpse of what the children experience in the classroom, and how the Montessori environment encourages exploration and personal growth.

### Calendar of Events

#### NOVEMBER

**23 Thanksgiving  
Dinner - All  
Children  
Dismissed at  
12:30**

**24-26 Thanksgiving  
Holiday**

#### DECEMBER

**10 Winter Party for  
Pre-Primary,  
Intermediate &  
Elementary**

**15 Winter Party for  
Toddler Program**

**20 Winter Vacation  
Begins**



Parents' Night usually brings the majority of the families back to school for a couple of hours, and the most recent one was no exception. Children were proud to show their parents what they have learned, and all the information that they have acquired. Children were proud to show their accomplishments, even though they might be in the middle of learning a lesson, and their work really looked like a "work in progress". When this happens, it vividly portrays what we as Montessori teachers believe, that the process of learning is sometimes more important than the product itself.

All of the children have attended one concert given by the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra. In addition, the Pre-Primary and Intermediate children visited Huber's Farm and had an enjoyable time picking vegetables and having a hayride. Many thanks to the Heritage Montessori PTA for underwriting the funds for these trips, and for the family events that preceded the Curriculum Meeting and Parents' Night.

Our annual Thanksgiving Dinner is right around the corner. The children are preparing the food for this feast and inviting parents as their guests. This all-school event helps us remember the importance of community, both historically and now, in the 21st century. We look forward to joining together with all the members of the school family and sharing a meal that we prepared.

In the same community spirit, we encourage all families to bring food for the needy, which will be distributed through the church's Outreach Program. There are many people in the greater Perry Hall area who might not be able to celebrate Thanksgiving without some assistance, and your generosity will mean a lot to them.

Happy Thanksgiving!



## News from the Elementary 2 Class

In October, the routines have become well established in the classroom, and it hums with energy and activity each day. The joy and excitement of learning is in evidence every day, and it is wonderful to be a part of it. We were happy to have had a few visitors this past month, and here are some of the comments:

“(Observing your class) really left an impression on us and we are looking forward to sharing your school’s philosophy with our education class.” (5 students from Goucher College)

“Seeing the fractions lessons really blew me away! I never really understood the concept of multiplication with fractions when I was in school” (Graduate student)

One of the comments that our visitors kept returning to was the enthusiasm that was exhibited by the children. They have not observed it in other schools that they have visited, and they kept asking how we managed to keep the enthusiasm alive in the older elementary children. I attributed that to several factors: the ability of the children to progress at the rate they choose, the ability of the children make choices for themselves (within certain limits), and that the children know there is no limit to what they would want to learn. All of these factors boiled down simply to the fact that the children were in control of their own learning, whereas in other schools the teacher was the one who was in complete control.

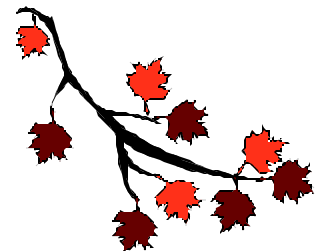
In our daily work, the third year children are working very well in their math sequence, and are progressing well in their multiplication work. All those math exercises are helping them compute the problems without using concrete materials. Soon we will be progressing to multiple digit multipliers, and the children are already finding out that large numbers follow the same rules as small numbers. In reading, they have been learning how to find the main idea and supporting details in non-fiction, and to apply that to their own writing. The fourth year children are working well in math as well. The fractions lessons seem to be a bit easier with multiplication, since common denominators are not required! In reading, they are learning to make notes from non-fiction writing, and using these notes to write summaries.

In addition, they are experiencing more symbolic language such as personification and onomatopoeia, and again, using these in their own writing.

Fifth year children have just completed the test preparation sequence. These exercises give them the experience of taking multiple choice tests, and the fact that they would not have the opportunity to redo an incorrect response. Since the children will be going into an environment where expectations will be very different from the ones they have now, preparing them is a necessary part of their Montessori experiences. In their daily work, they are working at various levels in math, and experiencing success each in their own way. In reading, they are examining text in greater detail, and analyzing the author’s use of language, imagery and tone, as well as getting more practice in making notes and writing summaries for non-fiction.

The children continue to work well in the history sequence, and making connections with the biological activities they undertake, such as work with the classification of plants and animals. The children working on the time line of humans continue to be fascinated by how technology advanced, from the most primitive stone tools to metal working. In science, the children work with the simplest experiments and progress to making polymers. Beakers and crystals and polymers are scattered throughout the classroom, waiting for the experiment to come to fruition. Is it any wonder that the children’s enthusiasm is in evidence everyday?

Ms. Catherine Szeto



## Hello from Mr. Gerson

Dear Parents,

First, I would like to thank all of the parents and grandparents for coming to our country lunch. A special 'thank you' to Pam Fuerer for taking pictures and creating a beautiful display on our bulletin board. The excitement of the country lunch has sparked a tremendous interest in the geography area in the classroom, and the students have been working diligently on their maps ever since. Thank you for all of your work to help make it such a wonderful experience for the children.

Through the month of November, the children have been getting many lessons and everyone is progressing through the curriculum smoothly. The first-years have been working with various materials to concretely understand and memorize math facts. The Montessori math curriculum teaches addition and multiplication together, so it would be beneficial if you reinforce these tables at home. The second and third-years have been spending their time with division and advanced fraction work. Contrasting multiplication and division tables helps define these math facts, and can be easily practiced at home as well. A 'math fact' homework assignment will be given in addition to their current math homework. More information will be sent home when this assignment begins, after the winter break.

I have seen remarkable growth in all of the children in all areas of the classroom. They work hard every day, and, based on our phone conferences, I believe it is safe to say that they all enjoy their time at school. Parent's Night was a great time to see what your child is working on, and I was also happy to have so many observers during Montessori Education Week. Our classroom is truly a peaceful place and our community is growing stronger every day.

namaste,  
-shaun-

## Greetings from Natasha, Jessica, and Madhavi

Happy autumn! The holiday season is upon us and the children are getting excited. They have just prepared the casseroles and banana bread for our Thanksgiving feast.

In the classroom, the children are very busy. The new children are perfectly comfortable in the classroom and function with minimal assistance from the adults. The goal of this first year is to help them get control of their environment, and use it themselves. They are almost completely independent at this point. The older children are working on several skills. Many are now writing and over half of the class is reading.

We are talking and reading about the meaning, history, and customs related to Thanksgiving. The children shared many of the things for which they are thankful during the circle time this week. They are thankful for moms and dads, grandmas, poppies, friends, school, their toys, the moon, the sun, and many other things! Remember to ask them what they are thankful for and share with them why you are thankful.

We are also preparing for the winter program, so you may hear some early holiday songs.

We would like to thank the people who have volunteered their time to come into the classroom and direct craft projects and prepare food with the children. Your help is appreciated by both teachers and students.

We are looking forward to seeing everyone at our Thanksgiving party!



## Notes from Ms. Humera and Mrs. Smith

Time is really flying by fast. November is already here, and Thanksgiving is only a week away. We have already started to sing Thanksgiving songs with the kids and talked about sharing and how we are thankful. We have also started to prepare the children for our big Thanksgiving feast. The children can't wait for the festivities to begin.

October was a very busy month for us; we went to Tiny Tot concert which the kids enjoyed a lot. We also went to Huber's Farm where weather wasn't too cooperative. It was cold and damp, but all of our chaperons were very helpful and patient. The children still had a lot of fun and got to pick their own pumpkins and different kinds of vegetables to bring home.

In the classroom, the three year olds are getting more independent and they are genuinely interested in new lessons. The four and five year olds are in the midst of discussing of world maps. We are exploring North America and South America. We just started a unit on sign language. The children in the morning class are showing interest in that unit. We are about to start numbers and the days of the week.

We would like to say thank you to all of our chaperones for helping out in our classroom and our fieldtrips. We really appreciate the effort and hope to see everyone at the Thanksgiving dinner.

*"The habits and skills which a child develops are good for a life time."*

- Aline D. Wolf, "[A Parent's Guide to the Montessori Classroom](#)"

Ms. Humera  
Mrs. Smith

## Toddler News

The toddler class has been making great strides. Each morning we find this wonderful group saying goodbye to Mom and Dad and settling into a busy morning of exploring the shelves, socializing with friends and enjoying stories and songs.

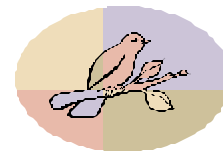
The Daily Living area has remained a favorite. Additionally, the Sensorial area has been popular this month. The children have been working really hard building the Pink Tower and matching the cards. This type of sensorial work helps to refine their senses and gain a sense of independence. We will continue to introduce new work to them over the next few months.

It is wonderful to see how comfortable the children feel in the classroom. You have helped them to achieve this in a large way by telling them that you trust them and recognize their capability each time they smile and step out of the door. The upcoming weeks will hold more exciting accomplishments for the toddlers, and I look forward to your participation.

*I saw a little birdie go hop hop hop  
I told that little birdie to stop stop stop  
I went to the window to say "How do you do"  
And he opened his wings and away he flew.*

I hope all of your families have a wonderful holiday season and take advantage of the time that you have with your little birdie as he/she grows everyday.

Beth McCarthy



## BASC News

The boys and girls in BASC are becoming one big happy family! Children who were shy and withdrawn, worked or played alone, or who didn't want to eat lunch, have all become more secure and comfortable in their environment. They appear to actually enjoy being students in the BASC program. Most of the time, they work quite well together.

During the month of October, the BASC group was busy constructing items using the Legos, K'Nex, and angled blocks. A few of the children expressed an interest in architecture as they worked with these materials. It was sometimes a very difficult and sad experience for some of these young builders to take apart a valued creation.

The older students were very thorough when putting together an activity. Their pretend restaurants were very elaborate, menus were planned, waiters and waitresses were selected, and food items were priced. They had fun, and the conversations were interesting.

During lunch time, we are continuing to work on acceptable table manners, cleaning up, and maintaining a noise level that is comfortable for everyone.

We are in the process of preparing both mentally and physically for the approaching holiday season. Although this will be an exciting time for all of us, trying to keep the classroom activities as normal as possible will be our goal. Seasonal projects will be made in the classroom. Hopefully, lots of these items will make it home for you to enjoy with your special ones.

BASC thanks each of you for your continued support.

Ms. Yvonne  
Ms. Lauren

## News from the Admissions Office

It is hard to believe that 2004 is almost over! Winter break and the holidays are just around the corner, along with reenrollment time. Reenrollment packets will be mailed to your home, and will arrive on or before January 14, 2005. Our attrition rate is very low, so it is important to make sure that you return your Tuition Agreement no later than the reenrollment deadline of February 11, 2005. After February 11, we will begin interviewing prospective students for any remaining spaces. The Admissions Office has received many requests for information for the 2005-2006 school year, and we already have one preprimary application.

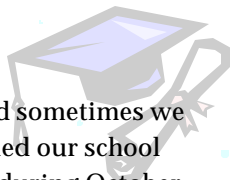
The Open House will be held on Sunday, January 9, 2005 at 2:00 p.m. The Open House is well attended, during which we receive many applications. If you have any friends, relatives, neighbors, or co-workers who have preschool age children, please let them know about this important event.

Please do not hesitate to let me know if you have any questions concerning placement for your child, or any other reenrollment questions. I am in the office on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays from 8:30 a.m. until 3:30 p.m. I will be working more hours beginning January 3, 2005, and will be available to answer any questions you may have.

Susan Bogart



## Alumni News



Our alumni visit us periodically, and sometimes we even get news of alumni who attended our school many years ago. Such was the case during October.

Brian Gordon came to visit and informed us that he is being home-schooled this year. His comment was that he was not learning anything in Middle School that he hadn't already learned in Montessori.

Valerie Mason, who was in the same class as Brian, sent us the results of her Maryland State Assessment tests. Her scores, both in Reading and in Math, were significantly higher than the average scores in her school, in Baltimore County and in Maryland. Congratulations, Valerie!

Brian Martin visited us as well. He said that eighth grade at Friends School involved a lot of homework. One of the projects he recently completed was similar to the Country Reports that he submitted while at our school.

David Allshouse, who attended our school from 1988 to 1990, recently interviewed Ms. Szeto for an anthropology paper in college. The title of his paper was Cross Cultural Interview and Analysis. He was pleased to report that he received a score of 100 for his paper. Well done, David!

Joseph Frank called to say that he received all A's in his most recent report card. He is attending Southhampton Middle School in Bel Air.

Neha Sastry reported that she made Honor Roll and is having breakfast with the principal on December 2. She is attending the magnet program at Parkville Middle School.

Joseph and Neha were our most recent graduates. Congratulations to both of them!

### *Thank You to:*

- ✍ Sandy Nelson, Kelly Woolford and Jennifer Young for assisting the children and staff on school picture day.
- ✍ Laurie Williams-Hogarth for coming to the Elementary 2 class and showing us all the bones!
- ✍ Chris Ballou and Sharon Heuscher for doing a craft project in Ms. Humera and Mrs. Smith's classes.
- ✍ Christine Grote and Melodie Sachs for substituting for absent staff members.
- ✍ Pam Feurer and Christine Zuzarte for volunteering in the classes on a regular basis.

### *Congratulations to:*

- ✍ The Chaput family on the birth of Joey, a brother for Dori in Mr. Gerson's class.
- ✍ The Wilson family on the birth of Kyla, a sister for Selena in Ms. Humera and Mrs. Smith's class.