

Inspiring a Healthy Spirit, a Strong Character, and a Clear Intellect



BLUEBIRD BULLETIN

OCTOBER 2010 VOLUME 37, ISSUE 2

© Montessori in Redlands, LIC# 360910803-4-5

What's Inside...

PTM News and Notes.....2
Halloween Carnival
Family Skate Night
Meet your PTM reps

Report from the Board.....3
Join the Board and have an impact on the school
Curriculum Matters.....3
How students learn Grace and Courtesy
Photos.....4-5
Record numbers turn out for Camp Montessori

Rockin' Parent Work Day
MIR, Farm, and Grove students honor Peace Day
Help Ensure the Continuing Quality of Education at MIR
MIR Kicks Off *Bridge the Gap* Campaign.....5
Get Ready to ShakeOut.....8
MIR to join Great California ShakeOut

Montessori kids are 'good at doing things': Learn more at the first Parent Education Night

Join MIR for the first Parent Education Night of the year on Thursday, October 21 at 7 PM.

Dr. Steven Hughes, pediatric neuropsychologist and assistant Professor of Pediatrics and Neurology at the University of Minnesota Medical School, will describe how Maria Montessori's brain-based approach to education provides an unparalleled

(Continued on page 6)



This is what your body looks like to your brain. Learn more at this entertaining and enlightening Parent Education Night.



Modern Research Confirms What Maria Montessori

by MAURA JOYCE, HEAD OF SCHOOL

"Maria Montessori really got essentially everything right, so far as I can see. She anticipated so much of what we know about neuroscience, brain development, and optimal models of education."—Dr. Steven Hughes, pediatric neuropsychologist

Dr. Hughes makes a bold statement about Montessori education, but he does not make it without evidence, nor does he make it alone. Over the last few decades, educational research has examined the brain, how humans grow and develop, and how to optimize learning, and the preponderance of the data suggests that indeed Dr. Montessori did get everything essentially right. But I will let Dr. Hughes tell you more about that. He will be here at MIR on **Thursday, October 21 at 7 PM** for our first Parent Education event of the year.

So, how did she do it? She didn't have access to the advanced technological medical equipment we have today. Nonetheless, Maria Montessori was a medical doctor and an anthropologist who approached her work very scientifi-

cally. She took very little on faith and wanted to see proof with her very own eyes, and she had a tried and true scientific tool at her disposal—observation.

When she began her work with children, she spent countless hours observing them. She watched them interact with their environment, with their families, with things, and each other. She learned about the brain not by seeing brain scans, but by seeing patterns of behavior, development, and growth in many, many children over weeks, months, and years. She also observed children in different parts of the world and still saw similar patterns. She talked about the development of the brain 100 years ago and her ideas and theories have proven to be correct.

(Continued on page 6)



A little bird told me...PTM News and Notes

by VANESSA LESLIE, PTM PRESIDENT

Thank you to all the attendees and volunteers who made Back to School Night a huge success! As always, it was a great kick-off to the new school year. The next school event will be the Parent Education Night and Annual Fund Kick-off celebration on Thursday, October 21 at 7 PM. That night will be another great opportunity to learn about our school and meet other Montessori parents.

Don't Miss the Halloween Carnival! Volunteers Needed

Friday, October 29, 5–8 PM • Costume Parade starts at 5:30 PM

Plan to bring the entire family for a fun night of games, rides, and festivities at the annual PTM Halloween Carnival! Admission is free and opportunities to help are plenty.

Volunteers Needed

Trying to figure out how you can fulfill your volunteer hour requirements? The Halloween Carnival is a great fun way to do this. Kids love it when their parent is helping in their class's booth. If you would like to help, please contact your room rep or look for a sign up sheet in your child's classroom. If you are not able to come or volunteer please help by donating food items for the carnival. Each class has a sign up sheet for their donated food. Setup for the carnival will begin Thursday evening, 6–7:30 PM and continue Friday from 9–12 PM and 3–5 PM. Your help is greatly needed for a successful event. We hope to see you there!

(Continued on page 7)



Bluebirds Explore Yosemite National Park

Bluebirds Valentine (3) and Rocco (1) Farre explore an Ahwahnee house near the Visitor Center on a recent family trip to Yosemite National Park in California. Mom Jacqueline Gimenez says "The kids had a great time. They really enjoyed the campfires at night with the park rangers. They also loved hiking and having picnics at the park."

Submit your picture of parents, children, or staff wearing their Bluebird t-shirts in unique locations to Lisa Kensok at lisa.kensok@montessoriredlands.org or drop them off in the office.

MIR Welcomes New Education Consultant

MIR welcomes Larissa Jefferson, who joins our Special Services team.

PTM Family Skate Night

Please join us for another night of skating and fun on Monday October 18 at Cal Skate in Grand Terrace from 5–7 PM. Tickets are available in the office for \$6 each or buy them at the door for \$8.

Cal Skate will not charge an entrance fee for those children not skating. They do have some skates available for toddlers as small as size 9 (3-4 year olds).

This event is open to all MIR, Farm, and Grove students as well as any friends and family they would like to bring as their guests.

Skate Night is a great time for families and we get the whole rink to ourselves. We look forward to seeing you there!

Report from the Board

by LEELA MADHAVARAU, PRESIDENT

Join the Board and have a long-term impact on the school

As I have written previously, the Board of Trustees is moving rapidly towards its goal of operating through committees; i.e., the majority of the ongoing work of the Board is accomplished through committees, rather than deliberations in the Board as a whole. This has led to a far more efficient Board able to complete a number of complicated goals, including a full reserve analysis of the property and the development of a long-range plan for the future of the school. Current committees include: Executive, Marketing, Long Range Planning, Finance, Nominating, and Hospitality/Recognition. At the annual Board retreat, the Board set two overall goals for this year: a) Securing our assets (facilities, finances, staff, and students); and b) Connecting our resources (alumni, documents, Montessori community, etc.). In addition, all committees will spend time this year refining their goals and resetting their priorities.

To start the year off, all committees begin their work reviewing their charters—the definition of their function and composition. The majority of our committees completed this in September. In doing so, a few committees recognized the need for more parent members. Two of these are Marketing and Long Range Planning. The purpose of the Marketing Committee is to evaluate and implement improved communication practices for the community stakeholders. This task includes ensuring appropriate parent, past parent, alumni, and greater community communications and programs to facilitate continuing cultivation of the friends and patrons of the school. The Long Range Planning Committee is designed to serve as representatives of the MIR Board of Trustees to develop, review, and assess the long-range strategic plan of MIR, and, with the Board, ensure that objectives, strategic initiatives, operating plans, priorities and policies of the school are consistent with the school's overriding vision.

(Continued on page 6)



Curriculum Matters

By PETER DAVIDSON,
ASSISTANT HEAD OF SCHOOL

"We do not stop to think that the child who does not do, does not know how to do."—Maria Montessori

Grace and Courtesy

After observing in Toddlers or Primary, prospective parents invariably comment upon how civilized it is, how the children get along so well and are so respectful of each other and their teachers. "How do Montessori children know how to wait for a turn, respect someone else's space, walk in the classroom instead of run, ask politely for help, or offer to help someone else?" they want to know. "It's not magic," I respond. "They have learned each of these skills, and many more, in the lessons of Grace and Courtesy."

Grace and Courtesy lessons are a regular feature of the Toddler or Primary classroom, especially at this time of year when new children are being introduced to the classroom. In Primary, these lessons often happen at a group time, first thing in the morning. One of the first skills introduced is simply "How to walk around a rug." The teacher will unroll a small rug on the floor in the middle of the circle of children and invite them to watch. With elaborate care, she will place her foot just beside the rug with every step she takes. Each time she comes to a corner, she will accentuate going all the way around and not cutting the corner by stepping over it. She will then announce, "Now you know how to walk around a rug" and invite several children, one at a time, to have a turn.

(Continued on page 7)

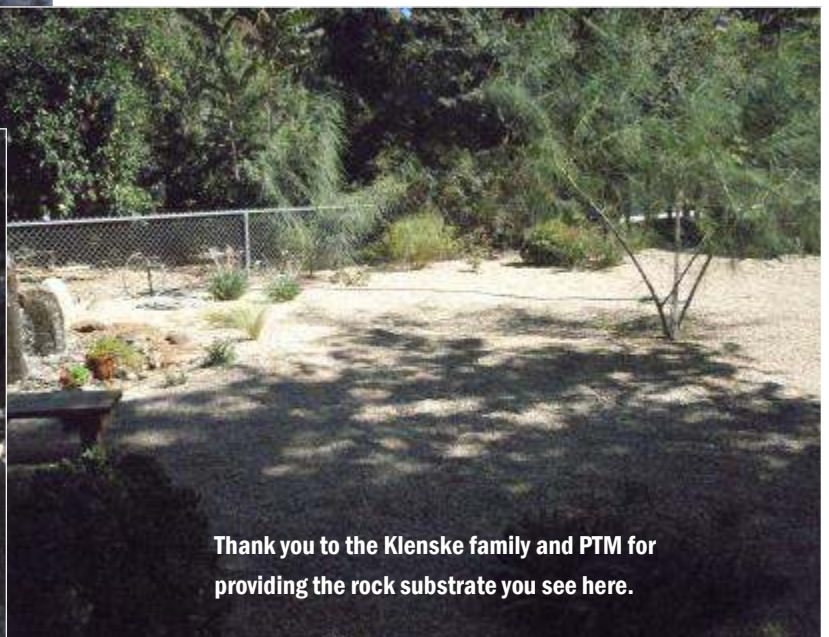


A RECORD 81 CHILDREN AND 65 PARENTS ENJOYED CAMP MONTESSORI



ROCKIN' PARENT WORK DAY

Thank you to all who helped out: Alisa and Chris Davies; Amber, Doug, and Glenn Claflin; Andrea Ray; Angela Brenchley; Brad Palenchar; Chad Dixon; Damon Bogan; Deane Kensok; Gang Zhong and Xingdong Zhang; John Berry; Kendall and Shelley McCarthy; Kris Goodfellow; Loni Kuhn; Mara Smith; Mr. Mohr; Ray Brown and Lisa Northrop; Steve and Beata Van Esch; Thaddeus Tilton; Tim Ormsby; Vanessa and Bob Leslie; and many more. Parents turned out in such force that we did not get everyone's names. We sincerely thank everyone who showed up!



Thank you to the Klenske family and PTM for providing the rock substrate you see here.

Help Ensure the Continuing Quality of Education at MIR

MIR Kicks Off Bridge the Gap Annual Fund Campaign

When you send your child off to school, you send your hopes and dreams for the future with them.

School is much more than a building or a campus—it is a significant part of your family's life; an environment that will help shape your child into the adult he or she will be.

From its peaceful grounds to its calm and ordered classrooms, MIR offers an environment designed to help every student grow and develop in their own way to become who they were meant to be. Its 12 acres and 12 classrooms abound with opportunities for students to discover, explore, and learn. The teachers, assistants, and staff of MIR provide the patient guidance to help the students do so, carefully matching lessons and methods to each child's learning style, respecting that each child is an individual who learns in his or her own way. Every day they seek to build bridges for the children to cross to their futures.

Providing individualized teaching for every student at a consistently high quality requires that each year we must ask families, alumni, and friends who can to make a generous gift to the MIR Annual Fund. Your voluntary gift helps bridge the gap between the tuition we charge and our costs.

On Thursday, October 21 immediately following our Parent Education Night, join MIR for a *Reception by the Bridge* to celebrate the work of MIR students and learn how you can support their education through the Annual Fund.

"Ideal teachers are those who use themselves as bridges over which they invite their students to cross, then having facilitated their crossing, joyfully collapse, encouraging them to create bridges of their own."—*novelist Nikos Kazantzakis*



"Education is all a matter of building bridges."

MIR, Farm, and Grove students come together to honor Peace Day



MODERN RESEARCH CONFIRMS...

(Continued from page 1)

This very important scientific tool remains a cornerstone in Montessori practice today. Our Montessori teachers spend time observing their classes every day. Over the past two weeks I have been able to observe in each of the classrooms and continue to be amazed at what I see: children who are so capable of doing so many tasks, working cooperatively, and engaging in such a variety of activity for the development of their brains. So, when parents ask me if the Montessori method is science- or research-based, I answer with an emphatic “Yes!”

When was the last time you really observed your children? I mean, when have you taken 20 minutes to just watch what they are doing? I can hear some of you saying, “Come on, Maura, I am so busy *with* them, I never get a chance to just watch them.” I know, it feels that way, but as they grow in independence, you will have more and more time to watch what they do, listen to them talk to their friends, and really observe how they work and how they approach things; that is, how their brains work. How about coming to MIR to observe their classroom? You are welcome to do that at anytime. It should not be the case that the last time you observed was when you were trying to get into the school. It would be a great opportunity for you to see for yourself how it all works. And while you have your calendar out to make an appointment to observe in your child’s classroom at school, don’t forget to **mark it for October 21 at 7 PM to hear yourself what Dr. Steven Hughes has to say.**



Dr. Maria Montessori observes her students in India.

PARENT EDUCATION NIGHT (cont.)

foundation for the development of academic, social, and executive functions critical for advanced problem solving and lifetime success.

In this highly visual, rapid-paced and entertaining talk, he shows how Montessori education parallels what we now know about brain development and fosters the development of advanced cognitive functions, social cognition, and such higher-order competencies as empathy and leadership.

Dr. Hughes’ talk will be followed by a lovely *Reception by the Bridge*, in honor of the kick-off of MIR’s Bridge the Gap Annual Fund campaign. Hors d’oeuvres and beverages will be provided, and the reception will feature a gallery of MIR student work.

Child care will be available for enrolled students ages 3 and older. There is no cost for this event or the child care. **Please RSVP by Monday, October 18.**

BOARD REPORT (cont.)

If you are interested in more information about serving on either committee, please contact me.

In addition to parent representatives on these Committees, the Board is also looking for future members. This past July, two of our members rotated off the board, and this coming July three of the current members (including myself) will leave the Board due to term limits. If you would like more information about serving on the Board, please contact Karen Oliver, current Chair of the Nominating Committee at kaoliver@verizon.net.

As always, if you have questions on other Board matters, you are more than welcome to contact me.

Leela MadhavaRau
President, Board of Trustees
leela_madhavarau@redlands.edu
(909) 748-8285 (work)



CURRICULUM MATTERS *(cont.)*

(Continued from page 3)

When group time is over and children are excused to move about the classroom and choose their own activities, she can observe the results of her handiwork, as the children pay special attention to walking around each rug they encounter. If anyone forgets and steps on someone else's rug, she has only to remind them: "Do you remember when I showed you how to walk around a rug?"

It seems so simple, doesn't it? And yet, consider this—without this one skill, children who knew no better would blunder into and across each other's spaces, causing disturbance and hurt feelings.

Another early lesson is "How to watch someone's work." Again the teacher will role play this important skill, emphasizing her closed mouth and the placement of her hands by her sides or behind her back.

With the introduction of these two skills alone, the teacher has eliminated a large percentage of the frictional elements that plague the average "preschool." In this same way we teach each of the social skills that allow a group of children to function independently but also respectfully: how to excuse yourself when stepping in front of another; what to do when you come to the water pitcher and someone else is already there getting a drink; how to serve the

carrots that you have just peeled and sliced; how to blow your nose; how to walk in a line; how to wait rather than interrupt. The list goes on and on.

Last year as I was substituting in a Primary class, I noticed a social skill that the children lacked. In one area of the classroom two shelves jutted out, creating a narrow passage between. Children coming from opposite directions would bump into each other coming through. Rather than admonishing these children for their lack of social awareness, I made a mental note instead. The next morning I gathered the whole group around the space in question. The assistant and I role-played what to do in this situation. We each picked up a tray and entered the narrow space from opposite directions. I made a deliberate show of stopping, stepping back, and inviting her to go first. Following this group time, as children went about their independent activities, I noticed any number of them looking for an opportunity to pass through this same narrow space. If someone was coming from the opposite direction one of them would stop, move back, and in a little piping voice say, "Oh, excuse me. Please go through first."

In this way the children gradually build the social skills of a polite society. As they find activities that meet their inner need for self-development and as their space and autonomy are respected, a sense of calm and purposefulness settles over the classroom. Perhaps it is magic, after all.

PTM NEWS AND NOTES *(cont.)*

(Continued from page 2)

Meet Your 2010-2011 PTM Room Reps

Your room representative is your liaison with the school, sharing important information about school activities and providing your feedback back to the school. Thank you to all the room reps for volunteering for these important positions.

Program	Class	Parent(s)
Toddler	Liana	Mara Smith
Toddler	Aedín	Amarah Yusuf
Toddler	Christine	
Primary	Jean/Maryhelen	Annie Rumary and Jennifer Burrows
Primary	Kara/Dorama	Jenny Juncaj and Serena Villalobos
Primary	Maria	Penny Lundgren and Coby Smith
Primary	Nikki	Kellie Bergendahl and Anu Diekmann
Primary	Sara	Jennifer Keller and Rika Minami
Elementary	Emily/Teesie	Kathleen Liess and Karen Oliver
Elementary	Kelly	Abba Ramsaran
Elementary	Margaretann/Nicole	Mary Anne Klenske

Next PTM Meeting

is October 21, 6 PM, right before Parent Education Night. All are welcome and encouraged to attend.



Need a new t-shirt?
Order it online today!

www.erschoolwear.com

BIRTHDAYS



students

Marshall Berry	10/2
Makenna Liess	10/4
Daniel McCall	10/6
Colby Grames	10/8
Logan Spencer	10/8
Josephine Crowder	10/10
Thomas Inkmann	10/11
Alexei Miller	10/11
Bennett Watson	10/13
Caio Bernardini	10/15
Madeline Davies	10/18
River Johnson	10/18
Roger Imbriani	10/19
Laura Andrade	10/24
Gabriella Benzor	10/26
Jace Hogue	10/27
Jasper Mueller	10/27
Daniel Klenske	10/28
Shriyaa Narayanan	10/30

staff

Cheryl Thomas	10/19
Whitney Sforza	10/29



TWEET: MIR is now on Twitter at twitter.com/mirmatters

Bluebird Bulletin is published by Montessori in Redlands, 1890 Orange Ave., Redlands, CA 92373, License number 360910803-4-5. © 2010. Submit articles, pictures, or comments to sa.kensok@montessoriinredlands.org or bring them to the MIR office.

Get Ready to ShakeOut!

by PAMELA HENRY, PARENT & EARTHQUAKE SURVIVAL CONSULTANT
The Great California ShakeOut is a voluntary annual statewide earthquake drill, scheduled this year for Thursday, October 21 at 10:21 AM, with more than 5.6 million participants signed up to date. MIR will participate in the "Drop! Cover! Hold On!" drill, which lasts 60 seconds. If you are on campus at that time, we invite you to do the same. Even toddlers will participate. Learn how you can participate at home or your organization at www.shakeout.org.

If you have questions about the ShakeOut, Montessori's participation, or earthquake education, please contact Pamela Henry. Learn how to protect yourself in a quake by visiting www.dropcoverholdon.org or consider participating in the "Camp Quake" survival education workshops offered October 16, 18, 21, or 25 at the Redlands YMCA.



OCTOBER 2010

27	28	29	30	1
			Upper Elementary camping trip to...MIR (oh, well)	
4	5 Nikki's class field trip to Riley's Farm Lango classes Positive Discipline class, 6:15–8:15 PM	6 Redlands Fire Department visits MIR campus	7 Lango classes Elementary 4th years to Heritage Tour	8 Innisbrook Giftwrap orders due Sara's class and Maria's class field trip to Greenspot Farm
11 Staff in-service day. No school, no childcare.	12 Lango classes Toddler field trip to Pumpkin Patch Positive Discipline class, 6:15–8:15 PM	13 Picture Day for all classes 	14 Lango classes	15 Coffee, Tea, and M.E., 9:30 AM Lower EI students to hear UofR symphony, 8:30–10:45 AM
18 PTM Family Skate Night, 5–7 PM 	19 Lango classes Positive Discipline class, 6:15–8:15 PM	20 Kara/Dorama's class field trip to Riley's Farm	21 Great California ShakeOut 10:21 AM Lango classes PTM Meeting, 6 PM PARENT EDUCATION NIGHT, 7 PM	22 6th Year Breakfast Burrito fundraiser, 8–9:30 AM
25	26 Lango classes Positive Discipline class, 6:15–8:15 PM	27	28 Lango classes	29 Bluebird Assembly, 9:15 AM HALLOWEEN CARNIVAL, 5–8 pm 