

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



BLUEBIRD BULLETIN

What's Inside...

Parent-to-Parent: City presents Green Action Award to MIR for Laptop Lunchbox program

Report from the Board: Board president speaks from the heart about her family's Montessori journey

Staff News: Employment opportunities at MIR
Students at work/student work

Parent Education Night: Learn how play build's your child's academic success

2008-09 MIR Annual Fund: Learn why it matters and what your donations mean to MIR and your children

JOURNEY & DISCOVERY TRAVEL A LIFETIME IN A DAY



Saturday, November 8

Time: 8 AM-2 PM — Lunch will be served
Join Montessori in Redlands along with Grove Farm and High School for *Journey & Discovery*, an intimate, hands-on experience that lets you explore the full spectrum of Montessori education from 18 months to 18 years.

Get to know your child's world. If you're puzzled about what it is your child does each day in their Montessori environment and how that relates to what you remember of school, you're not alone! Join MIR and Grove staff as they lead you on a journey through the Montessori curriculum from toddlers through high school.

Space is limited. Contact the MIR office (909-793-6989) to RSVP or for information.



By Maura Joyce, Head of School—“*The role of education is to interest the child profoundly in an external activity to which he will give all of his potential.*”

—Maria Montessori

NOVEMBER IS PARENT MONTH

Last month, our first Coffee, Tea, and M.E. (Montessori Education) ended with a request from parents for the next topic: “My child is approaching kindergarten age. I am so confused as to what to do next!”

I know that many factors come into play when deciding on an educational path for your child. You know Montessori has been a wonderful experience for them, but it's different from what you remember of school and many questions can flood your mind once your child approaches public school age.

What does the MIR Elementary program cover? Why should we continue to pay for private school when we can get an education for “free”? Isn't it time that my child's schooling looks the way my schooling did?

Each week in November will offer you opportunities to explore these questions

and get some clear answers by furthering your own understanding about Montessori education and what your child's experience is at school each day. Mark your calendars for the following events:

Journey & Discovery Saturday, November 8, 8 AM–2 PM. At this event, you'll visit Montessori classrooms for all ages, from toddlers through high school, and get a chance to work with the materials in each. This will give you a hands-on understanding of Montessori methods and what

your child does each day.

Coffee, Tea and M.E. (Montessori Education) Friday, November 14, 9 AM. Open to all parents, this month's topic will be especially pertinent to parents who

“Each week in November will offer you opportunities to...get some clear answers...”

(Continued on page 8)

PARENT-TO-PARENT

From the PTM—Thanks to all who made the Fall Carnival a big success! Your volunteer efforts and donations make this a great event that's enjoyed by the whole MIR community.

Carnival Booth Winners—All the booths were decorated so fabulously that it was really hard for voters to narrow down winners! Great job to all the classrooms. PTM will award gift cards for books to the following classrooms:

1st—Eye Ball Alley (Margaretann's class)

2nd—Pumpkin Toss and Peace Well (Emily's class)

3rd —Spider Toss (Nikki's class)

Innisbrook—Thanks to all the families who participated in the Innisbrook Fundraiser as well. PTM receives 50% of the profits, money that gets reinvested in MIR to support events such as the Carnival as well as campus improvements.

Coffee Curbside—On Thursday, November 20, join us at curb for coffee, juice, and breakfast treats! PTM will also be selling shirts, tote bags, and Laptop Lunchbox accessories. We hope to see you there!

Canned Food Drive—Redlands Family Services needs food donations this holiday season. To participate, bring non-perishable food to your child's classroom or the office by November 21.

Next PTM Meeting—Wednesday, November 19, 6 PM

Go Green: New Options for *Bluebird Bulletin*

As part of our environmental stewardship initiative, we are offering new options for the *Bluebird Bulletin*.

Paperless Option

You can be notified by e-mail when new issues of *Bluebird Bulletin* are available online. You can still receive the print version as well, or go completely electronic to save paper.

Paper Option

You can still opt to receive the print version.

Let us know your preference—stop by the office or e-mail us at

info@montessoriinredlands.org

PTM NEWS AND NOTES

City of Redlands Presents “Green Action” Award to MIR

MIR's Laptop Lunch program was recently recognized by the City of Redlands with a Green Action award, which is given to organizations around the City that have implemented programs to reduce their impact on the environment.

The purpose of the Laptop Lunch program is to reduce waste from convenience food and disposable lunch packaging at the school by at least 25%. PTM donated the lunch boxes to every student and employee at the school on the

suggestion of parent member Brandi Jennings, who had used the lunch-boxes for years. Parents are also allowed to buy lunch boxes for themselves. The program has been very successful so far. “It cuts a ton of trash,” said Primary teacher Jean Bonner-Drinkwine. “We have 45 kids in our class, so packaging waste was unbelievable. Our four trash cans used to be filled after lunch each day. Now they're only a third full.”

“That's what this is all about,” said Redlands Mayor Jon Harrison. “There are all kinds of things you can do to make a difference [environmentally], and we want to acknowledge and encourage that.”



Redlands Mayor Jon Harrison presents a Green Action Award to MIR Head of School Maura Joyce, PTM President Shawnda Zook, and Primary Teacher Jean Bonner-Drinkwine.

EMPLOYMENT

OPPORTUNITIES AT MIR

MIR is seeking to fill two positions: part-time Spanish Instructor and fulltime Classroom Assistant/Support person.

The Spanish instructor works with children ages 3–12. The ideal candidate is a native speaker, has a Bachelor of Arts, experience working with children, and knowledge of our Montessori programs.

The Classroom Assistant/Support person works with Primary children ages 3–6. The ideal candidate has a minimum of 12 Early Childhood Education units and enjoys working with young children.

MIR is an equal opportunity employer. We offer a competitive salary and a supportive work environment.

Contact Maura Joyce about these positions.

Report from the Board...

Living the Montessori Journey

By Leela MadhavaRau, President, Board of Trustees—Every now and then I feel the urge to break with the staid announcements of the Board Corner and speak from the heart about why I hold this position. Throughout any given week, I realize how frequently I invoke Montessori education, its founder, its precepts, and its legacy. I believe that I do this more frequently these days because the elements that make this a perfect system of education are increasingly missing in our world.

In my first year seminar class at the University, which examines issues of power, privilege and difference in global perspective, students are continually saying two things, “Why didn’t we learn this in school?” and “I didn’t realize that everything is so interconnected.” It saddens me that these students have reached the college level without acquiring basic foundations of knowledge, and that the characteristic of innate curiosity seems to have bled out of them along the way.

I feel immensely privileged to be able to take on the financial commitment to ensure that my children have a Montessori education. We do this in great part because I don’t think that they will be asking those two questions cited above and will, instead, be asking many more because curiosity is embraced and encouraged in Montessori classrooms.

Parents will have the opportunity to participate in Journey & Discovery on Saturday, November 8. If you have not attended previously (or perhaps haven’t gone for a few years), this is a must-attend event. During this time, you will see the entire spectrum of a Montessori education from toddler through high school. You will notice that theme of interconnectedness on every rung of the Montessori ladder, from 18 months through 18 years. As Maria Montessori noted in 1948, “We shall walk together on this path of life, for all things are part of the universe, and are connected with each other to form one whole unity.”

I feel that I live this spectrum daily, although my youngest children are now 8 and in the Elementary program. My middle son attends Grove Farm and my oldest son is at Grove High School. The other day, the oldest was writing his “praxis” paper, discussing all the subjects he is studying this quarter in light of a single

question, “How does the introduction of new elements change space?” This seemed to me to be a perfect metaphor for a Montessori education: the ability for a 15 year old to synthesize learning in subjects as diverse as art, Spanish, math, science, history, and English in a cogent essay examining change through time and space. He understood all those interconnections in a way that seems lost in many sectors. The 12 year old can move from learning to give injections to a goat to studying proportions (and building a scale model of Saturn with his friend) to debating a novel while working on what plants will best grow on the Farm.

My twin children delight in every week at school; their parent letters are full of the joy of learning – “this week was fantastic or excellent or wonderful.” Their curiosity about the world is positively encouraged and questions welcomed, even when slightly off-topic—divisibility by 25 might not quite jive with the internal workings of a blue whale but let’s talk about what connection there might be!

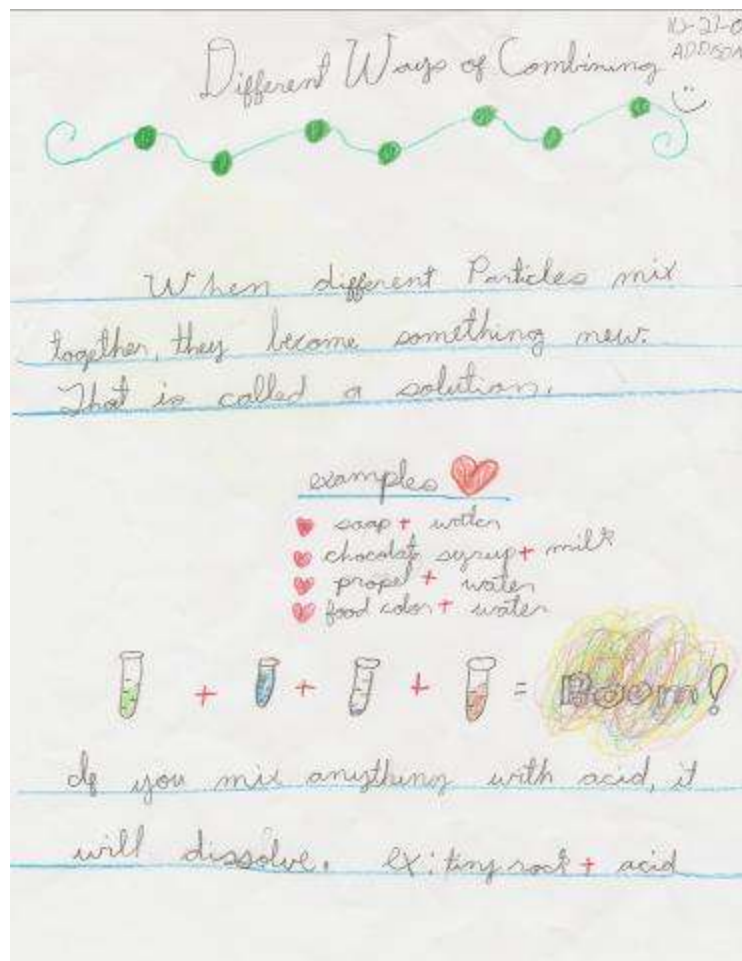
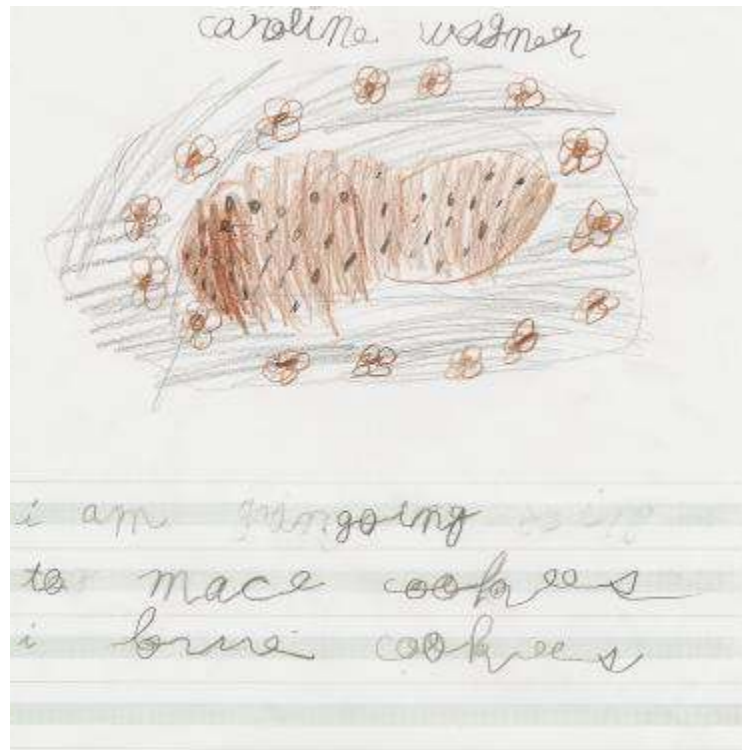
Living the Montessori Journey is not necessarily the easiest path—it is not the model of education with which many of us grew up—but I am firmly convinced that these children can truly change the world because they understand that the world is composed of interconnecting parts. As is so often the case, Maria Montessori expresses this most succinctly:

The secret of good teaching is to regard the child’s intelligence as a fertile field in which seeds may be sown, to grow under the heat of flaming imagination. Our aim is not only to make the child understand, and still less to force him to memorize, but so to touch his imagination as to enthuse him to his innermost core. We do not want complacent pupils, but eager ones. We seek to sow life in the child rather than theories, to help him in his growth, mental and emotional as well as physical, and for that we must offer grand and lofty ideas to the human mind.

As always, I welcome your questions or comments, be they on Board matters or living life as a Montessori parent of four. I am best reached at leela_madhavarau@redlands.edu.

Leela MadhavaRau
President, Board of Trustees
leela_madhavarau@redlands.edu
Phone: (909) 528-2813

Students at Work/Student Work





Parent Education Night: **Building Blocks, Building Academics**

Did you know that you use the same muscles to blow bubbles as you do to form the sounds of speech? Play—all play—is critical to a child’s development and academic success.

Join us on Wednesday, November 19 at 7 PM to learn about the importance of play and movement to your child’s development. Learn what milestones your child should be achieving at different ages and stages and which activities are beneficial after school to support academic growth. Be surprised by what playing can do to support a child’s academic success now and into the future.

Where: Montessori in Redlands
1890 Orange Ave., Redlands

RSVP: In the office

Presenters: Speech and Language Therapist
Lidewij Honcharik
Occupational Therapist
Saskia de Jong



First Contact

“Since it is through movement that the will realizes itself, we should assist a child in his attempts to put his will into act.”
— Maria Montessori

MIR GO GREEN CORNER

LIGHTS AROUND THE HOUSE

The way we use lights in the house make a difference in energy use. The first thing you can do to save energy is to buy compact florescent light bulbs. CFLs use fewer watts but still put out as much light as incandescent bulbs.

The second thing you can do is pay attention to which room you are using. When you are done in a room you're using, you can remember to turn off the lights.

The third thing you can do is use only as much light as you really need. Install task lighting for a desk instead of lighting up the whole room.

How you use lighting in your house makes a difference in energy use.

**Savannah Mueller, age 9,
Margaretann's Class**



Shake, Rattle, and Roll

MIR will join millions of Californians for "The Great Southern California Shake Out" earthquake drill at 10 AM on November 13. At that time, people all over the state will "Drop, Cover, and Hold On" to practice for the a magnitude 7.6 earthquake—the "Big One."

Seismic experts consider an enormous earthquake to be inevitable. The ShakeOut Drill, the largest earthquake preparedness activity in U.S. history, is our chance to practice what to do when it happens. Individuals, families, businesses, schools and organizations will join firefighters, police officers and other emergency responders

across the state in the drill. MIR families are encouraged to visit www.shakeout.org for tips on developing a family earthquake plan.

MIR Stays Prepared

The Great Shakeout isn't MIR's only emergency preparedness activity. MIR staff takes time each year for preparedness training and practice for a variety of potential emergencies. On Monday, October 13, during the staff in-service day, staff reviewed and updated MIR's disaster response plan and ran drills to ensure a speedy and appropriate response to natural and man-made emergencies, both large and small.

COFFEE, TEA, AND M.E. (MONTESSORI EDUCATION) REPORT

By Maura Joyce, Head of School—MIR's first Coffee, Tea and M.E. brought 10 parents together on Friday, October 17. It was a great opportunity for me to meet with parents in a casual, relaxed setting and talk about their children and their experience at school. MIR's new Assistant Head of School, Peter Davidson, was also in attendance .

One of the topics that came up was whether MIR could offer additional extracurricular activities at the school, particularly for Primary students. Parents inquired about adding dance, art, music, or foreign language after school.

When considering such requests, I have to answer two questions: 1) Does this new activity support our mission to be the best Montessori school that we can be? 2) Can we support the activity logistically?

When we decide to add activities, we as a school need to be sure that nothing takes away from us being the best Montessori school we can be. That is our primary focus and we cannot take away from that.

Logistics is a different issue. Parents at the coffee inquired about activities for Primary students after school. I told them how proud we are as a school to offer quality "all-day" programs at the Toddler and Primary levels for our

students who need after-school care. MIR has worked hard to maintain a consistent, Montessori environment for our students younger than 6. These children, developmentally, have a much more difficult time moving from their classrooms to another activity, because they have a more difficult time "switching gears" from one place to the next. Logistics thus becomes an issue for us.

MIR does have some after school activities that have evolved organically at the school—piano lessons, family yoga, Elementary dance. Logistically, these have been easy to incorporate and we have had space for them. Adding more options, more classes, creates more work for the administration and teachers. This could take focus and energy away from our wonderful Montessori program.

That being said, our teachers in the all-day primary classes are very welcoming of parents who have a talent to share with the class. They have a much more flexible schedule in the afternoons and know that the children enjoy some of these "extras." We have had parents share their artistic and musical talents in those classes. If parents are interested, please inquire with your child's teacher.

2008-2009 MIR ANNUAL FUND

“EDUCATION IS NOT FILLING A BUCKET BUT LIGHTING A FIRE”

—WILLIAM BUTLER YEATS

Montessori in Redlands kicked off its 2008-2009 Annual Fund on Thursday, October 9, with the ambitious goals of raising \$55,000 and reaching 100% participation by MIR family, friends, staff, and the Board of Trustees.

This year we promised that families that made their pledges by Friday, October 31, we would not mail them the full, glossy Annual Fund packet. This saves paper for better environmental stewardship and ensures that more of your money goes directly to meet school needs. Thank you to all the families who responded generously to this drive.

Why should I donate to the MIR Annual Fund?

Tuition pays for your child's education. The MIR Annual Fund pays for program enhancements, staff training and development, and capital improvements to our facility, allowing us to provide the highest quality Montessori education for your child in ways that tuition alone cannot provide. A percentage is also deposited into our endowment fund to ensure the short- and long-term financial security of the school.

Why not raise tuition instead?

A substantial tuition increase would mean that many families could not afford to send their children to MIR, especially now. A diverse population has always been part of our identity. By offering the opportunity for voluntary contributions, families can give according to their financial ability. Unlike tuition, donations may be tax deductible.

As a parent of multiple MIR students, do I need to make more than one donation to count toward the classroom participation program?

One gift is all that is needed to be applied to each of your children's classroom participation levels.

If you have already pledged or made your donation, thank you! Donations can be made at one time or in monthly installments. All contributions must be received by June 30, 2009.

Not only does MIR today and in the future benefit, but your child benefits directly this year!

The goal of the MIR Annual Fund is 100% participation by families, staff, and friends as well as \$55,000 in funds raised. As classes reach the participation milestones noted in the form of donations or pledges before December 31, 2008, they will receive:

- ◆ **50%**—Class receives cash for its outdoor environment (gardens, sand toys, etc.)
- ◆ **75%**—Class receives cash for an item on the teacher's "Annual Fund wish list" (see classroom for details)
- ◆ **100%**—Class receives \$150 towards a field trip of its choice

If we reach both of our fundraising goals—100% participation in all classes and \$55,000—the whole school will celebrate with a special musical performance and all-school picnic.

Four Good Reasons to Give

1. **The school can't be as strong without your help.** Tuition and fees cover 82% of school expenses. Your support, combined with that of other parents, alumni, and friends of MIR, bolsters our programs.
2. **Support future generations at MIR.** Ensure that not only your children, but also your children's children will continue to have access to the wonderful learning environments, teachers, and education that your family has experienced at MIR.
3. **Keep tuition costs down, especially now.** By raising a portion of its funding through voluntary contributions to the MIR Annual Fund, MIR is able to keep monthly costs down for all families.
4. **Your support makes the difference between a good school and a great school.** As a private, non-profit school, our ability to serve your children and provide the best Montessori education possible is directly related to the money raised in the Annual Fund.

BIRTHDAYS



students

Collin Copeland	11/1
Hanna Skaggs	11/1
Xochitl Brinton	11/2
Amelie Rosso	11/2
Dylan Keller	11/3
Sydney Rice	11/3
Jackson Barkley	11/4
Juliann Choi	11/4
Mara Wuhs	11/5
Anusha Keshavan	11/6
Lindsay Gullon	11/8
Kennedy Mohr	11/8
Marin Cummings	11/9
Krupa Kanji	11/10
Tanvee Sai	11/10
Neha Vijay	11/11
Sydney Grames	11/12
Ryan McNaughton	11/12
Dylan Blee	11/13
Amman Siddiqi	11/13
Aiden Burke	11/14
Oliver Owen	11/16
Micah Thomas	11/17
Jesse Sonntag Garcia	11/17
Zoe Brown	11/18
Raegan Ramirez	11/21
Kamron Mabudian	11/22
Carly Copeland	11/24
Benjamin Mickelson	11/24

staff

Kara Holzinger	11/1
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NOVEMBER IS PARENT MONTH (CONT.)

(Continued from page 1)

might be “on the fence” about continuing their child’s Montessori education.

Building Blocks: Building Academics Wednesday, November 19, 7 PM. Speech therapist Lidewij Honcharik and occupational therapist Saskia de Jong will present the relationship between motor development and language development and how academic advancement relies on growth in these areas.

Parent-Teacher Conferences Monday and Tuesday, November 24 and 25. These conferences are your time to learn about your child’s progress and the work that they do each day. You will receive a progress report for your child and be able to discuss each academic and social/emotional area one-on-one with your child’s teachers. Please sign-up and take advantage of this time.

Students Learn about Crucial Technology on GIS Day

Wednesday, November 19 is GIS Day. Parents and local community members will show MIR students how geographic information system (GIS) technology is being used for everything from keeping the electricity running to helping conservation efforts. For more information, visit www.gisday.com.

Volunteers are still needed to present to some of our classes. If you are interested, contact Pepa Sadek at psadek@esri.com for information.

November 2008

3 Childcare reservations due for Veterans Day observance.	4 Dance class, 3:30-5 PM in yoga room.	5	6	7 Staff in-service day. School closes at NOON. No childcare. 8 <i>Journey & Discovery</i> , 8 AM-2 PM
10 Veteran’s Day observed. No school; childcare by reservation.	11 Dance class, 3:30-5 PM in yoga room. VETERAN’S DAY 	12 Sara’s class and Nikki’s class—field trip Toddler classes—field trip		14 Coffee, Tea, & M.E. (Montessori Education), 9 AM Childcare reservations due for Parent-Teacher Conference days
17	18 Dance class, 3:30-5 PM in yoga room.	19 PTM Meeting, 6 PM Parent Education Night, 7 PM 	20 Make-up and re-take Picture Day PTM’s Curbside Coffee and Bluebird Shirt sale, 9 AM	21 Elementary classes’ Thanksgiving Feast Bluebird assembly
24	25	26	27	28
Parent-Teacher Conferences. No school; childcare by reservation.		Thanksgiving holiday break. No school; no childcare.		
				

“We do not want complacent pupils, but eager ones. We seek to sow life in the child rather than theories, to help him in his growth, mental and emotional as well as physical...”—Maria Montessori