

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



# BLUEBIRD BULLETIN

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## What's Inside...

**PTM News and Notes:** PTM looks to elect two officers for 2009-10 school year

**Report from the Board:** Please complete our parent satisfaction survey

**MIR 'Go Green' Corner:** MIR Board of Trustees launches Green School Initiative

**Children's work:** Stories of life/Practical life

**Bike enthusiasts:** Bike activities at MIR and beyond

**MIR Spring Gala:** A groovy time was had by all

**Summer at MIR:** Registration is open for one of our best summer programs yet

## Parent & Child Night: Follow Your Child

"Follow the child" is a foundational concept of a Montessori education: Maria Montessori observed that children will show you when they are ready to take on a new challenge.

On Parent & Child Night, we invite you to follow your child as they guide you through the work they do each day, giving you lessons, answering questions, or showing off a favorite activity. Teachers will be on hand to answer questions and help as necessary.

Parent & Child Night will be held Thursday, April 16, from 5 PM to 7 PM. If you have more than one child attending MIR, the schedule gives time to rotate classrooms and work with each child one-on-one.

While you may want to come prepared with ideas of work you want to see, your child will have his or her own agenda for the evening. Let them lead the way.



By Peter Davidson, Assistant Head of School *"The environment must be rich in motives which lend interest to activity and invite the child to conduct his own experiences."*—Maria Montessori

## Big, Beautiful MIR

I was asked to write the lead article for this issue of the Bluebird Bulletin, by way of introducing myself in words to any of you I've not yet met in person, and to share my impressions of MIR after my first six months as Assistant Head of School. I think I can sum up that impression in two words: big and beautiful.

Because my office is on the north side of campus, I get to walk over the bridge several times each day, taking in the beauty of the school in a citrus grove with a stream and wildlife corridor running right through it. Nearly every time I cross the bridge I see a parent and child, or a teacher and her class, stopping and noticing new tracks in the sand below, listening to the call of a song sparrow, looking for evidence of the

work of water after a rainstorm, taking in signs of the season in a falling leaf or new spring bud.

And big: Big as in 300 students, 50 staff, and 12 acres. Big as in the big effort of a toddler taking care of his/her own needs independently, of a Primary student decoding a word for the first time, of a group of elementary students re-searching the right variety of citrus to replace a dying tree.

*"I've been in Montessori education for 35 years and I've never seen a harder working group of teachers."*

Big, as in the commitment and dedication of the staff. I've been in Montessori education for 35 years and I've never seen a harder working group of teachers. Big, as in a big-hearted and welcoming community. From day one I have felt welcome here—first by the administrative staff:

*(Continued on page 6)*

## PARENT-TO-PARENT

### Spring Gala is a Success Thanks to Parents and Staff

Spring has sprung! Thanks to all the parents and staff who made the Spring Gala such a success!! We are happy to report that the PTM-sponsored Dinner-of-the-Month item sold for \$400 and two Dessert-of-the-Month items sold for \$500 each bringing in \$1400 at the Gala. Thank you to the families who purchased these items. We look forward to cooking and baking for you!

## PTM NEWS AND NOTES

### Bluebirds to Fly in the “Run Through Redlands”

Join the MIR Bluebird Running Club as they run the 5K portion of the annual Run Through Redlands, which will be held Sunday, April 19, starting at 7:55 AM (other races have different start times). Registration forms are available in the office or online at [www.redlands-events.com/RTR1.htm](http://www.redlands-events.com/RTR1.htm). Early registration for the 5K is due April 13 and costs \$25. After that date, the rate is \$30. Information about other races is available online.

You can walk or run the 5K course, which starts at the Redlands Mall in downtown Redlands and finishes at the historic Redlands Bowl. Strollers are welcome. The race will be held rain or shine.

Many Redlands schools participate, so let's show our community support with a big MIR group. Bluebird shirts are available for purchase in the office.

See Jean Bonner-Drinkwine or Emily Fitzgerald for additional information about the MIR Bluebird Running Club.

### PTM To Hold Elections for Two Officers for Next School Year

The positions of PTM President and Secretary are now open for nomination. Any MIR parent is eligible. Duties of the positions are as follows.

#### President:

Carries out the purpose of PTM, facilitates PTM meetings and the executive board meetings, coordinates work of PTM room reps and Board members, ensures PTM events and fundraisers are publicized, ensures Bluebird merchandise is organized and orders filled, coordinates various activities of PTM and all events, provides monthly PTM updates to the Board of Trustees and attends Board meetings, works closely with PTM Treasurer to ensure budget is maintained, and attends all PTM events.

#### Secretary:

Takes minutes for all PTM meetings and Executive Board meetings, maintains office binder with meeting minutes and current copy of

bylaws, notifies members of meetings, drafts Parent-to-Parent article for the *Bluebird Bulletin*, distributes staff birthday cards, and assists at PTM events such as Back to School Night and the Halloween and Spring carnivals.

These officers help PTM achieve its four main functions:

- ◆ Increase parent involvement in the school.
- ◆ Educate parents about Montessori theory and practice.
- ◆ Encourage communication among school staff, the Board of Trustees, and parents.
- ◆ Nurture a sense of community at MIR.

**Nominations will be accepted April 20 through May 1.** Stop by the office to learn more about PTM, the positions, or to nominate yourself or someone else. Elections will take place May 18 through May 29.



Primary teacher Kristin Vredevoogd takes on the rocky slope of Mt. Kilahuea volcano in Hawaii during a recent vacation. She made sure to wear her Bluebird shirt for the occasion.

*(Continued on page 6)*

# Report from the Board...

## Tell Us—Are You Being Served?

By Leela MadhavaRau,  
President, Board of Trustees

We at MIR strive provide the highest quality programs possible, and to engender an atmosphere of trust so that you feel comfortable coming to teachers, PTM representatives, Board members, or the Head of School to share feedback and ask questions about your children's education.

To provide as many different avenues to express your opinions as possible, each year we create an anonymous parent satisfaction survey. The current one is now open at [www.montessoriinredlands.org/surveys](http://www.montessoriinredlands.org/surveys). The survey is your opportunity to share your thoughts on customer service, program and instruction quality, governance and administration, and other topics. This is your chance to tell us how you really feel and help affect school planning.

To get the most complete information possible, we ask that all parents/guardians in each family complete this survey. Please take the time to provide us with considered responses, whether positive or negative. It should take 10-20 minutes to complete.

MIR can respond most effectively to concerns if we have an annual snapshot of our community's thoughts. We greatly appreciate the time you take from your hectic lives to give us your thoughts about MIR.

As always, please feel free to contact me with any questions or comments.

Leela MadhavaRau  
[leela\\_madhavarau@redlands.edu](mailto:leela_madhavarau@redlands.edu)  
Phone: (909) 528-2813

## MIR 'GO GREEN' CORNER

# MIR Board Launches Green School Initiative

By Ed Murphy, Board of Trustees

The Board of Trustee's Long Range Planning Committee has agreed to sponsor a Green School Initiative, an examination of the ecological sustainability of the school. We're using, as a starting point, the United Nation's Brundtland Commission definition of sustainable development, which they define as "development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs." This definition includes three elements: ecological, social, and economic.

For the Green School Initiative, we are looking at ecological sustainability within the bounds of MIR. We will evaluate potential recommendations on the basis of how they fit into the school's core values: the *Whole Child*, *Prepared Environment*, and *Community*. The goal of the Green School Initiative is to include sustainability in support of these values.

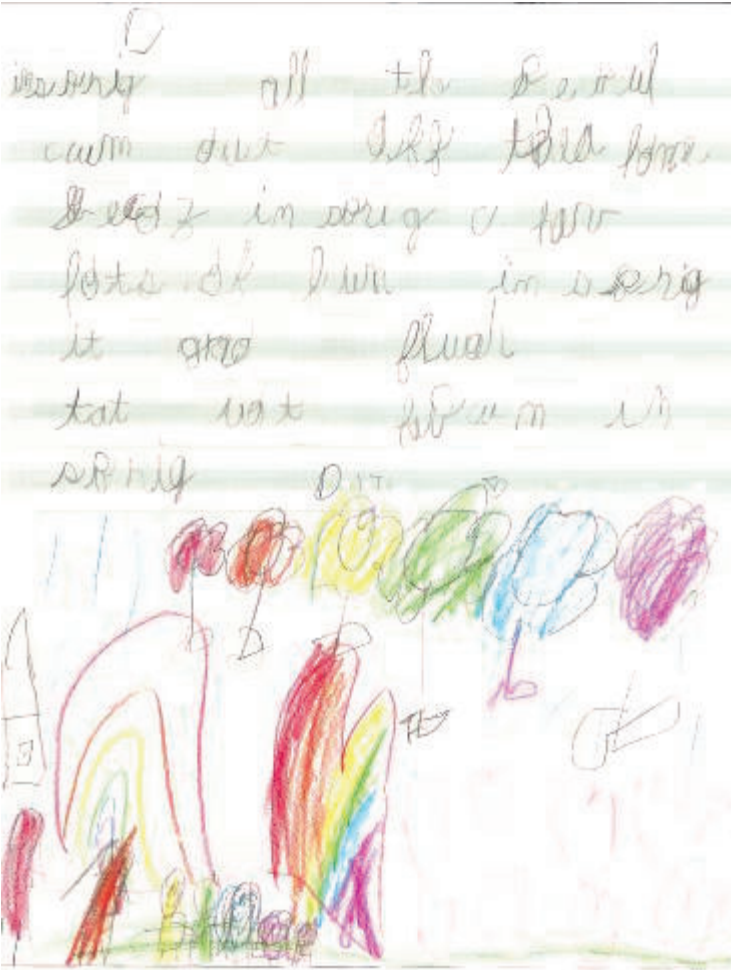
We're fortunate to start with so many advantages. Sustainability has been close to the core of the school since the beginning and has been taken seriously by our community for more than 30 years. Environmental education is already an important part of our curriculum. Our classrooms recycle and compost already, and most classrooms have gardens. We serve healthy school lunches, not junk food and soda. The Laptop Lunch program to reduce lunch waste has been a great success; it has been broadly adopted within the school, raised community awareness, and been awarded a community sustainability award. Our natural environment, the grapefruit grove, is a key part of our school's identity and links us to the rich citrus heritage of our region. Our students and families are already environmentally aware.

While there is much more to do, we will leverage these strengths in our Green School Initiative. In the coming months, we will announce a series of focus groups to gather insight from our community, including students, parents, faculty, and outside experts. We plan to look at a broad range of categories, including curriculum, facilities, operations, and transportation. Potential recommendations could include, for example:

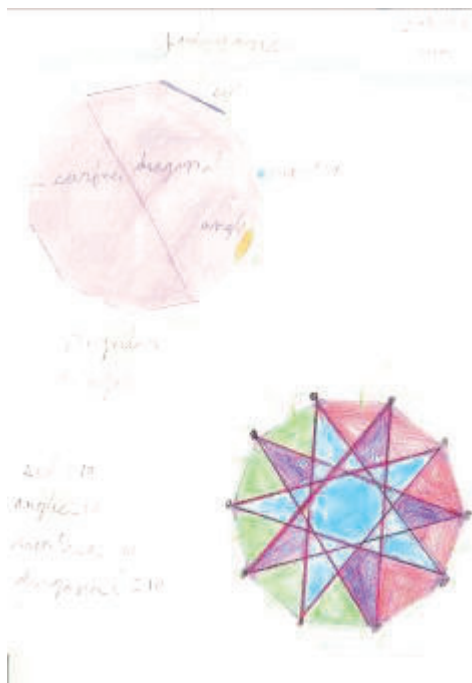
- ◆ Conduct a study of our energy usage and other inputs, including water

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# Stories of Life



In spring all the people come out of their home because in spring you have lots of fun. In spring it grows flowers. That's what happens in spring.—Diti Shah, age 5, Kristin's class



a rain forest is a forest  
 that grows in a tropical  
 place. all the rainforests have  
 no seasons so the  
 plants stay green  
 all year round, some  
 leaves grow big  
 so they can catch  
 more sunlight in  
 the rainforest. lots  
 of plants in the  
 rainforest we eat  
 and make  
 medicine out of them

the temperature of the  
 rainforest is 70° to 80°  
 degrees fahrenheit  
 lots of animals live  
 in the rain forest  
 such as monkeys

A rain forest is a forest that grows in a tropical place. All the rainforests have no seasons so the plants stay green all year round. Some leaves grow big so they can catch more sunlight in the rain forest. Lots of plants in the rainforest we eat and make medicine out of them.

The temperature of the rain forest is 70° to 80° Fahrenheit. Lots of animals live in the rain forest such as monkeys.

—Anna Kensok, age 8, Nicole's class

# Practical Life



(Continued from page 3)

- ◆ Create a nature path
- ◆ Consider carpools, “walkpools,” and “bikepools”
- ◆ Explore alternative energy sources and other large facilities changes
- ◆ Identify other comparable schools as models to emulate

For more information, contact Maura Joyce.

### Useful Green School Links

- [www.greenschools.net](http://www.greenschools.net)
- [www.mtpc.org/rebates/green\\_schools/gs\\_publications.html](http://www.mtpc.org/rebates/green_schools/gs_publications.html)
- [www.gogreeninitiative.org](http://www.gogreeninitiative.org)
- [www.dist113.org/hphs/redesignpages/technology/green\\_school/green\\_school.htm](http://www.dist113.org/hphs/redesignpages/technology/green_school/green_school.htm)

### Strep Throat Alert

Several children at MIR have recently been diagnosed with strep throat. If your child is ill and is complaining of a severe sore throat, be sure to have his or her throat “swabbed” (tested) at the doctor’s office. In a couple of cases the infection was missed because children were not tested.

**What is strep throat?** Strep throat is an infection in the throat and the tonsils caused by streptococcal (strep) bacteria. The throat gets irritated and inflamed, causing a sudden, severe sore throat.

**What are the symptoms?** The most common symptoms are a sudden, severe sore throat; pain when swallowing; fever of more than 101F; swollen tonsils and lymph nodes; and white or yellow spots on the back of a bright red throat. Some children may have a headache and belly pain.

Strep throat is highly contagious. If you suspect your child has it, please keep them at home and take them to the doctor. Strep throat is typically treated with antibiotics.

(Continued from page 2)

The Spring Carnival is only a month away... Come join in the fun!

The carnival will be held Saturday, May 2, 11 AM to 3 PM.

Volunteers are needed! Please talk to your child’s teacher about how you can help their class with this event.

### Upcoming PTM Events

- ◆ PTM meeting, Thursday, April 9, 6 PM
- ◆ Spring Carnival, Saturday, May 2, 11 AM TO 3 PM

## Bike Activities at MIR and Beyond



### Bluebirds Fly at Redlands Bicycle Classic

It was awesome to see MIR Bluebirds participating in the public rides at the Redlands Bicycle Classic, including our own PE teacher Rachel

Mickelson who rode in the Women’s Criterion.

Prior to her participation in the Redlands Classic, Amber Neben, 2008 US National Women’s Time Trial Champion and member of the 2008 Beijing Olympic Cycling Team, stopped by for a visit with MIR Elementary students. Amber gave the students insight into the world of bike racing, answered questions, and autographed pictures.

### Coming Soon – Bike Racks

Eight bike racks have been purchased with the money raised from the recent Bluebird Bike-A-Thon. Thank you to all who pledged! The racks are currently being manufactured at Rettig Machine here in Redlands and should be finished by the end of April. The students are donating two of the racks to the Grove High School to promote bicycle riding among the high school’s student body.

### Upcoming Events

The Redlands Conservancy will again host biking and hiking activities in conjunction with their **Trails at 10 Program**. The events begin at 10:00 AM on Saturday, April 4, 11, and 25 and feature a free lunch. For more information call 909-792-1800 or visit [www.redlandsconservancy.org](http://www.redlandsconservancy.org).

**Team Learning 4 Life—Tour de Canyons** will be held May 23. This bike event features a family friendly ride as well as some more challenging routes and is a fundraiser for special education programs. For more information visit [www.teamlearning4life.org](http://www.teamlearning4life.org).

May is Bike Month and **May 11-15, 2009 is Bike to Work Week**. Ride happy!

(Continued from page 1)

Maura, of course, but also Mary Parker who shared her daily words of wisdom with me; secondly, by the children, especially the oldest elementary students who adopted the new guy in the office next door; thirdly, by the parents, starting at the Halloween Carnival and continuing at every Coffee, Tea, and ME, and most recently at the auction.

Thank you all for helping me feel a part of this big, beautiful Montessori in Redlands!

# Gala Partiers Get Their Groove On

Thank you to all who attended Studio 54, the MIR 12th Annual Spring Gala & Auction on March 21. The Gala included live and silent auctions and raised \$28,155 in funds for financial aid and to support the school's programs, facilities, and teaching staff.

MIR would like to thank San Manuel Band of Mission Indians and Beaver Medical Group for sponsoring the evening (Silver Sponsors).

We would also like to thank the Spring Gala Committee for making this event possible:

- \* Jill McDermott, staff representative
- \* Jillian Mueller, Chair
- \* Karen Oliver, MIR Board of Trustees representative
- \* Shawnda Zook, PTM President

Thanks also goes to all the parents who volunteered to make the Gala such a great success.

**Dueling Afros:** Guests John Imbriani and Pernella Sommerville chose hair-raising attire for the evening.



The lovely Bobbi McCormick assists Jillian in showing Liana's class auction item: A one of a kind keepsake blanket.



March 26, 2009  
 Dear Maura, Pam, Jill & the  
 Montessori staff,  
 Thank you so much for inviting  
 the Redlands Chamber of Commerce  
 to attend your 12th Annual Spring  
 Gala & Auction with the Studio  
 54 theme. We had a crazy time,  
 and were honored to be your  
 guests. You really know how to  
 throw a party for a great cause.  
 Sincerely,  
 Robak Tambouris & Pernella Sommerville



Gala Queen Jillian Mueller snuggles up to husband David.



Auctioneer Sam Neely gets pointed with bidders.

# BIRTHDAYS



## students

Meadow Greene	4/4
Savannah Mueller	4/5
T. Nandi Dube	4/7
Anjali Carter-Rau	4/9
Naveen Carter-Rau	4/9
Aynsley Silliman	4/9
April Triplett	4/13
Leo Walt	4/13
Piotr Andzel	4/14
Walker Mueller	4/14
Alexandria Gidley	4/17
Virginia Michaela Henry	4/17
William Hovey	4/18
Kyrellos Ibrahim	4/20
Paawan Singhi	4/20
Aiko Zane	4/22
Deminica Maryanovich	4/24
Katelyn O'Brien	4/24
Aidan Hagglov	4/25
Munsa Dhillon	4/26
Carlos Perez	4/26
Jaden Wee	4/26
Natalie Ramsaran	4/27
Amory Martin	4/30

## staff

Mary Rudzinski	4/5
Margaretann Harrison	4/9
Bobbi McCormick	4/20
Christine Povero	4/23
Christine Kemmerer-Fisher	4/27
Carmen Levesque	4/28
Sara Garcia	4/29

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## Summer at MIR: Creative Immersion

Enrich your child's summer at Montessori in Redlands.

### Toddler Summer Program

Toddlers will supplement their Montessori environment with special summer activities such as gardening, crafts, and water play. One outing per session will enhance their summer fun.

### Primary Summer Program

Primary students will incorporate the Montessori philosophy and materials with special projects such as cooking, gardening, sporting activities, and swimming. They will have a minimum of one field trip each session.

### Elementary Summer Program

The Elementary program is open to any student age 6-12 who has completed first grade.

Classes are designed to let students dive into new creative experiences and build their skills, strength, and character. **See insert for complete details.**

## April 2009

<b>6</b> Visit by Western Association of Schools and Colleges	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b> Nikki and Sara's combined field trip Kristin's class: Museum on Campus, followed by lunch in the park	<b>9</b> SPRING PICTURE DAY PTM meeting, 6:00 PM	<b>10</b>
<b>13</b> Open Enrollment begins for new families	<b>14</b> Margaretann's students present "Shake Hands with History," 6 PM-7:30 PM	<b>15</b>	<b>16</b> PARENT & CHILD NIGHT, 5 PM	<b>17</b> Coffee, Tea, and ME, 9 AM Join the Bluebird Running Club for Run Through Redlands, April 19
<b>20</b> PTM Board nominations open	<b>21</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>24</b> Bluebird Day and assembly, 9:15 AM
<b>27</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>29</b> Kristin's class field trip	<b>30</b> Kara and Dorama's class field trip	<b>1</b>

**"Written language can be acquired more easily by children of four years than by those of six. While children of six usually need at least two years to learn how to write children of four years learn this second language within a few months."**

—*Maria Montessori*