

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



BLUEBIRD BULLETIN

JANUARY 2009 VOLUME 35, ISSUE 5

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

What's Inside...

Parent-to-Parent: Annual Fund pledges support your child's classroom immediately

MIR Go Green Corner: Choose how you want to receive school notices

Report from the Board: Have your say at the Board Open Forum

Parent Education Night: Learn how you can

support your child's independence

2008-09 MIR Annual Fund: Let this be the year we reach 100% participation

Save the Date: MIR 12th Annual Spring Gala & Auction will be held Saturday, March 21

JOURNEY & DISCOVERY A USER'S GUIDE TO MONTESSORI

Save the Date:
Saturday, February 21

Time: 8 AM-3 PM – Lunch will be served.
Register in the office or call 793-6989 for more information or to register.

Montessori in Redlands and Grove Farm and High School will host *Journey & Discovery*, a hands-on seminar that lets you explore the full Montessori curriculum from 18 months to 18 years.

Journey & Discovery has been expanded to give you more time to "travel a lifetime in a day." The event is a one-day seminar that gives you a "deep dive" into the full Montessori curriculum by letting you experience it for yourself. Consider it a "user's guide" to your child's education. Look for more information later this month.



By Maura Joyce, Head of School

"Little children, from the moment they are weaned, are making their way toward independence."—Maria Montessori

PROMOTING INDEPENDENCE AT HOME

Happy New Year!

In year's past I have described a phenomenon that often happens in our Montessori classrooms after a long break like the past two weeks. **Montessori teachers remark how "easy" the transition back**

to school can be, because the children are so excited to get back to their work.

They eagerly get their hands back on the material and throw their energy into the task at hand. It is wonderful to watch!

So, **why doesn't this happen when we ask them to clean their rooms?** Confession time from the Montessori-trained Head of School: In my house, my child leaves his clothes on the floor, his dishes on the table and his toys spread out in two rooms. He would never get away with this

in Kelly's Elementary class! (He never did in Kara and Dorama's Primary class or in Liana's Toddler class either.) Yet, I need to remind him about everything and I do not get the automatic response he gives each day in his Montessori environment.

"Why is it my child does all these things independently at school but not at home?"

Over the years many parents ask, "Why is it my child does all these things independently at school but not at home?" Hmm...good question. Let me go back to my friend, Maria Montessori, to answer that one.

Two of her quotes come to mind:

"Little children, from the moment they are weaned, are making their way toward independence," and "Never help a child with a task at which he feels he could succeed."

(Continued on page 4)

PARENT-TO-PARENT

From the PTM—Welcome back parents, staff, and students of Montessori in Redlands! We hope your holidays were wonderful. Thank you to all who donated to the PTM food and toy drives. The MIR community donated 44 gifts and 287 lbs of food to the community! Thanks for all your support. We wish you peace and happiness in 2009.

Annual Fund Pledges Immediately Benefit Your Child's Class

Did you know your annual fund pledge will immediately benefit your child's classroom? Participation is tracked by classroom. At 50% participation your child's classroom earns cash for its outdoor environment; at 75% your child's class receives an item on the teachers Annual Fund wish list; and at 100% your child's classroom earns \$150 towards a field trip of their choice.

One of PTM's mission is to support MIR's fund-raising efforts. We are happy to report that the PTM room rep and board participation is very close to 100%! We hope that you will participate and pledge today.

PTM NEWS AND NOTES

Volunteer Opportunities

Are you looking for something new to do and a way to get involved with the school? How about volunteering with the PTM from time to time! We need help organizing Bluebird merchandise. We also are in need of dinners for April and May for the PTM Dinner-a-Month awarded in last year's Spring Gala & Auction.

If you are willing to donate some time or cook for two families, please e-mail PTM president Shawnda Zook at s.zook@att.net.

Low on Wrapping Paper? Need a Gift?

It's not too late to order wrapping paper, gifts, and other supplies through Innisbrook. You can place orders online at www.innisbrook.com. Our school code is 102074. Orders placed online will be shipped directly to your home. Funds help sponsor PTM events and activities.

Upcoming PTM Meetings and Events

PTM Meeting—Thursday, January 15, at 6 pm
Bluebird Day—Friday, January 30. Wear your T-shirt and show your school pride!

Bluebirds around Town

Show your school pride! Submit your photo of you or your children anywhere in the world wearing their Bluebird t-shirt, and we'll publish it!



Bluebird Aidan Spangrud enjoys the MIR playground at a school carnival.

MIR 'GO GREEN' CORNER PAPERLESS OPTIONS AT MIR

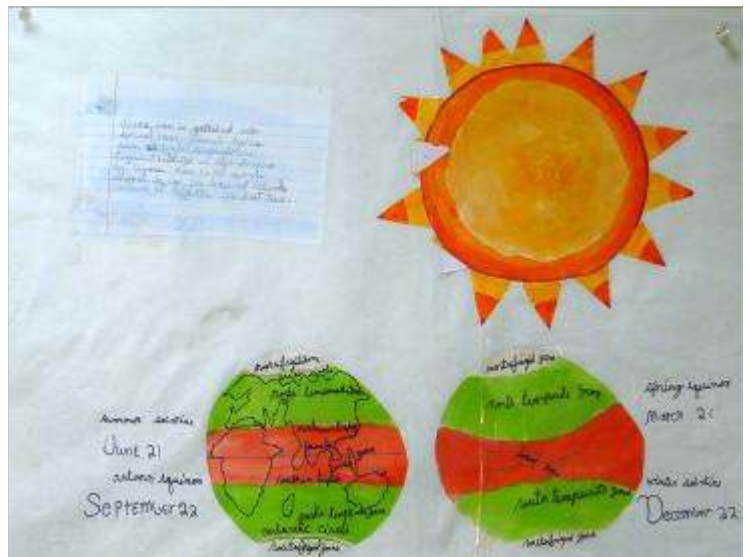
As part of our environmental stewardship initiative, we are offering new options for the *Bluebird Bulletin* and other school communications.

Paperless Option: You can be notified by e-mail when new issues of *Bluebird Bulletin* are available online and to receive school notices by e-mail as well.

Paper Option: You can opt to continue to receive printed versions of the *Bluebird Bulletin* and all school notices.

Paper and Paperless Option: You can receive both print and e-mail versions of the *Bulletin* and school notices.

Let us know your preference—stop by the office or e-mail us at info@montessoriinredlands.org. If you do not send us a selection, we will continue to provide you with paper copies of all materials.



Report from the Board...

Join us for our January Open Forum

By Leela MadhavaRau, President, Board of Trustees—On behalf of the Board of Trustees, I wish the entire MIR community all the best in 2009.

Several years ago, the Board instituted a series of Open Forum meetings. These are held prior to the September, November, January and March Board Meetings. They offer the parent community an opportunity to come and ask questions about Board policies and decision-making. While many of your questions may revolve around day to day matters best resolved by conversations with teachers or the Head of School, the Board appreciates the opportunity to hear from you in person. We are a close-knit community; your input is greatly valued and will assist the Board in formulating future policy.

Specific Board Committees—Finance, Marketing, Long Range Planning, Facilities and Technology—continue to meet and make forward progress in determining long term direction for the school. Later this academic year, you will be invited to participate in sessions to provide us with feedback about a number of initiatives that have arisen in the Marketing and Long Range Planning committees.

We hope that you will take advantage of the Open Forum session to let us know about our progress. We also welcome your opinions on the direction that you would like to see the school moving in the next few years. How do you picture Montessori in Redlands in 2015? What changes do you feel we will need to make? What should always remain constant?

The session will take place on Monday, January 26 at 6:30 PM in the Yoga Room. Refreshments will be served.

As always, I welcome your questions or comments. I am best reached at leela_madhavarau@redlands.edu.

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

Under Construction: Children at work



Elementary student Taylor Triplett from Emily's class assists Primary student Liv Massih from Jean and Maryhelen's class with her math as part of his school community service work.



Elementary students Brigid Lamoureux and Kristen Henry from Nicole and Margaretann's class explore the historical game of hoop rolling, or "hoop and stick," at a recent field trip to Riley's Farm in Oak Glen.

(Continued from page 1)

These two quotes glaringly point out the roots of my frustrations at home.

In regards to the first quote, I need to remember that **my child is “making his way” toward independence. He has not yet arrived.** He still needs some guidance. I know that he knows where to hang his coat and put the dishes and materials away in his classroom, but **have I taken the time to show him what the expectations are at home?** Come to think of it, he cannot reach the coat rack in our hallway! And with the second quote, how many times have I “just done it for him” because it is faster? **He picks up on things quickly, so if he knows that I will eventually do it, he won’t bother.**

Independence needs to be fostered. In the Montessori environment, the entire focus of the work, the materials, and the interactions with the teachers and assistants is fostering this independence. At home, this is not always

the case. However, promoting independence in the home is not impossible and can be implemented simply, a little at a time. **How do we do this? Come and find out at our January 15 Parent Education Night, appropriately titled Promoting Independence.**

Please join the Montessori teachers on Thursday, January 15 at 7 PM. This Parent Education evening will have a special format, with Toddler, Primary, and Elementary teachers splitting into their respective groups to provide age-appropriate tips. Toddler teachers will focus on independence in the home. Primary teachers will focus on allowing children to do what they are capable of doing. Elementary teachers will talk about promoting appropriate independence.

This format allows you to attend the talk that fits the age of your child, or take a “sneak peek” at what to expect at the next level up. In other words, **in true Montessori fashion the subject will be customized to your appropriate level.** We look forward to seeing you there!

“How many times have I
‘just done it for him’
because it is faster”



Primary students from Kara and Dorama’s class serve a healthy snack that they prepared themselves.

Parent Education Night: Promoting Independence

The Toddler who carefully puts away his work on the little shelf in class. The Primary student diligently wiping up after herself at lunch. The Elementary student who enters class and immediately gets to work on a project.

As parents observe the determined work of their children in the classroom, they inevitably come to the same question: “Wait! My child can do that?! Why won’t s/he do that at home?”

Join us on **Thursday, January 15 at 7 PM** to learn how you can encourage greater independence in your child. The evening’s discussions will be grouped by program level, and you are free to join the discussion for your student’s age group or see what to expect at other levels. Topic areas are:

- ◆ Toddlers: At Home with Montessori
- ◆ Primary: Doing what They are Capable of Doing
- ◆ Elementary: Promoting (Greater) Independence

We will meet in the Yoga Room. **Child care is available by reservation for registered students ages 3 and older.**

RSVP in the office or call 793-6989.

“Any child who is self-sufficient, who can tie his shoes, dress or undress himself, reflects in his joy and sense of achievement the image of human dignity, which is derived from a sense of independence.”—Maria Montessori

2008-2009 MIR ANNUAL FUND

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

—WILLIAM BUTLER YEATS

Let this be the Year—by Maura Joyce, Head of School

Dear Parents,

Happy New Year! I was compelled to write you a personal note about the Annual Fund this year. Given the economic situation right now and the effects that we all feel in one way or another, I wanted to address perhaps the “counter-intuitive” request for donations.

It’s everywhere, isn’t it? We all have friends and family who are suffering and every one of us has had to tighten our belts and become more frugal. We see it in our own MIR community—increased requests for Financial Aid, families cutting back on program hours, and, yes, a decrease in donations to the Annual Fund.

I have had several conversations with parents who have said, “Not this year, Maura,” when I have asked about giving. I do understand and the last thing that I want to be is pushy. But I wanted to appeal to another perspective on the Annual Fund.

Many of us may not be able to give the amount that we have given in the past. Many of us are just trying to get our bills paid and doing a very delicate financial balancing act. But maybe we can look at this as the year that we simply stand behind our school in numbers—not dollars—but numbers.

Participation is equally important to the amount we manage to raise. Participation has tremendous intangible benefits. Teachers and staff in the classes that get to 80%, 90% and 100% feel encouraged and grateful. That participation mark sends a message of support and confirmation to them, the school, and the entire community. Don’t get me wrong—many families give support in other ways and the staff is grateful to all the families no matter how they choose to give. But this show of collective support goes a long way.

This year I invite you NOT to think about the money, but to consider participation. What a powerful message it would be for us to get 100% parent participation in a year when the economy is down! Please consider pledging to the Annual Fund this year. To help your participation go further, we have extended the deadline for the parent participation incentive program to January 31.

Thank you for your consideration. I wish you a healthy and happy 2009!

Sincerely,
Maura C. Joyce
Head of School

Participation Totals by Class

Christine—57%
Aedín—57%
Liana—71%
Jean/Maryhelen—42%
Kara/Dorama—88%
Nikki—75%
Kristin—52%
Sara—52%
Emily—70%
Kelly—81%
Margaretann/Nicole—61%

Classroom Participation Program Incentives

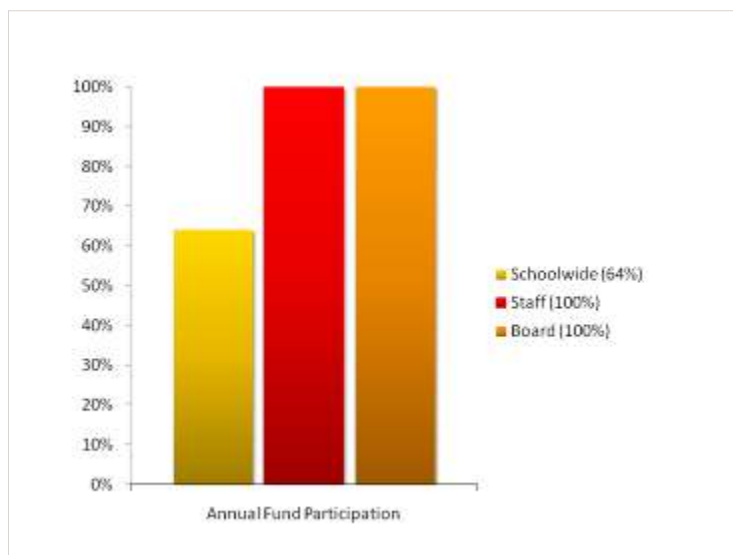
Pledges or donations must be made by January 31 to qualify. All pledges must be paid by June 30, 2009.

- ◆ **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 fund-raising goals—100% partici-

pation in all classes and \$55,000—the whole school will celebrate with a special musical performance and all-school picnic.

Total donations and pledges: \$28,472



BIRTHDAYS



students

Natalie Hage	1/1
Ellen Svenson	1/1
Parker Abt	1/3
Nundhaa Sivabalan	1/3
Debra Cheng	1/5
Isabel Hassan	1/5
Caroline Lambson	1/5
Thomas Webb	1/5
Sydney Oliver	1/8
Avneesh Bajaj	1/11
Rene Adrian-Gaus	1/12
Macy Keller Feld	1/12
Leila Clutter	1/13
Krishan Kanji	1/14
Zachary Steinmann	1/14
Rebekah Murphy	1/15
Vladimir Ivanenko	1/16
Ethan Riggins	1/16
Eric Chen	1/17
Christopher Pham	1/17
Asha Diekmann	1/18
Isabel Hopkins	1/18
Christopher Albertson	1/20
Alex Nielsen	1/22
Karina Brenchley	1/23
Lucas Youngman	1/23
Amanda Liu	1/24
Christina Liu	1/24
Julian Teague	1/26
Emily Lowe	1/29
Arnauld Martinez	1/29
Anagha Nambisan	1/29
Peregrine Caldwell	1/31

staff

Molly Webb	1/12
Sandy Bachar	1/13
Midge Leon	1/16
Lisa Kensok	1/25

Save the Date!

MIR will host its 12th Annual Spring Gala & Auction on Saturday, March 21, from 6 PM to midnight at the Redlands Country Club.

Celebrate good times with an evening of disco fun, free drinks, all-you-can-eat buffet, and silent auction. The highlight of the night will be a live auction, hosted by the incomparable Sam Neely and featuring beautifully hand-crafted art and customized furniture items created or decorated by the students at MIR. For more information,



MIR 12TH ANNUAL SPRING GALA AND AUCTION

contact the MIR office or call 909-793-6989.

Sponsor Opportunities

If you are interested in sup-

porting the event, please see Jill McDermott in the office.

Opportunities range from full sponsorships to advertisements in the gala program.

January 2009

			1	2
			Winter holiday break. No school; no childcare.	
				
5	6	7	8	9
12	13	14	15 PTM Meeting, 6 PM PROMOTING INDEPENDENCE— Parent Education Night, 7 PM	16 Coffee, Tea & M.E., 4 PM
19 Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day. No school; no childcare.	20	21	22	23
26 Board of Trustees Open Forum, 6:30 PM	27	28	29	30 Bluebird assembly—wear your t-shirt!