

**Greetings!** As the new academic year unfolds it has been wonderful to see our returning and new friends. The benefits of the Montessori method of learning don't stop at school. The updates from the teachers below include suggestions and topics to talk about at home. This is just one way the teachers and parents work together. We encourage you to communicate with your child's teachers often. Please contact the teachers or the Parent Organization with ideas for fostering the parent-teacher partnership. ---The Parent Organization

### **Reflections from Miss Liz**

- The dinner table is one of the best times to engage in good conversation with your child. Make a point of sitting down together for the evening meal.
- At pick-up time, greet your child warmly. Your child is eager to see you even when it doesn't always seem that way. Be sure your cell phone is turned off at this time. Your child is more important than any call.
- Now that autumn is in the air, take an evening walk with your child.
- Make your home a beautiful retreat to return to in the evening, a special place for children to quietly reflect is a lovely gift.

### **Highlights of Learning Activities**

#### **Pre-school and Kindergarten**

The last days of summer are upon us as we slip into autumn's golden, magical appeal. The children are easing into the new school year as they develop new and foster existing friendships. Singing songs with movement helps in this transition. Our classes have many areas of learning. We have been noting the daily changes in the weather. The children are learning the days of the week and months of the year. Some children are making maps while others are learning their letter sounds and numbers. The children are also intrigued with the life cycles of the frog and butterfly as well as the cloud formations.

The kindergartners have been on several nature walks to take advantage of the incredible eco-system of our beautiful campus. The October curriculum includes the life cycle of the apple tree and pumpkin as well as the classification of apples and leaves. A trip to Kuiper's Apple Orchards is also on their agenda. They are very excited!

Take time to appreciate your child's work by letting them share what they have done in our Montessori school environment. Education is not what the teacher teaches but what the child spontaneously does for him/her self.

#### **Lower Elementary**

Our first month together has been lovely. Although fully half of our students are new to our room, we have become "family" already. We are studying the creation of the universe, galaxies, stars and planets. Ask a Lower EI student about the "Big Bang" presentation and how cooking butterscotch pudding resembles the formation of the Earth. Also, if you haven't heard a rendition of "Know Your Oaks" request one from a Lower EI student, as we are learning about leaves and trees too!

#### **Upper Elementary**

The Upper Elementary students have spent the month of September studying prairies forbs and grasses. Over the last few weeks they have not only been able to identify twenty-three different species, but they have also had the opportunity to observe some of these in their natural environment along the Fox River. Each child has now chosen an individual forb or grass to research. They will illustrate and write a report on their chosen plant. The children will be visiting the Morton Arboretum prairie on October 3<sup>rd</sup>. Our next month will include observation, research, botany experiments and art expressions of the American prairie.

#### **Junior High**

The Junior High students have many areas of focus in their curriculum, but one of the most basic is that of written and oral communication with others. We began the year by reviewing the parts of speech and identifying them in various written works. This concept will be continually reinforced in the weekly vocabulary lessons where the students will identify the part of speech and also learn other forms of each word and when to use them. After reviewing the parts of speech, the students then used their knowledge of adjectives and adverbs to create a vividly descriptive passage about summer that expressed their enjoyment of this time of the year.

The students have now entered a study of the five paragraph essay. The first topic assigned was to describe a walk in nature. The students are currently working on essays for the Patriot's Pen essay contest sponsored by the Veterans of Foreign Wars (see <http://www.vfw.org/index.cfm?fa=cmtty.level&did=151> for more information on contest). Communication is such an integral part of education that the writing process, and later public speaking, will be a main focus for the entire year.

### **Parent Organization Update**

Check the calendar on the website ([www.MontessoriBatavia.com](http://www.MontessoriBatavia.com)) and bulletin boards for more information about ongoing and future events and activities. **Contact Miss Stacie ([sbenjamin91@aol.com](mailto:sbenjamin91@aol.com)) or Miss Dana to receive your new username and password for the parent only section on the Montessori website.** The primary purpose of this newsletter is to inform families about the activities in the Montessori environment so that we can work together for the education of the children. If you have topics that you want to see in this newsletter please contact Susan Vonderheid Radeztsky at [vonde@uic.edu](mailto:vonde@uic.edu) or 630-906-0569.