

Newsletter • January 9, 2007

Greetings! Hope that everyone had a peaceful and joyful holiday season. Thanks to everyone that contributed to the success of our school in 2006. We are excited about the activities planned for 2007 and invite Montessori families to join us as we continue to strengthen our school community.

Highlights of activities and topics of study from the classrooms:

Jr. High: Ms. Helen

For the Junior High Students, the second quarter will end on January 12th and report cards will be sent home on January 19th. Stanford Achievement tests will be administered during the week of January 22nd. In conjunction with the study of slavery, the Underground Railroad, and the Civil War, the Junior High students will attend the presentation of *A Midnight Cry* at the Paramount Arts Center on January 26th.

Upper Elementary: Ms. Liz

Temples and the ziggurat, homes and farming, the wheel, cuneform, and the Ishtar Gate are all represented in the projects the children have created in our study of Mesopotamia. The students will be inviting their parents to our classroom in mid-January to present these creative endeavors. We will culminate our study of Mesopotamia with a visit to the Oriental Institute on the University of Chicago campus.

Lower Elementary: Ms. Trixie and Ms. Rachel

With the New Year comes a new cultural focus for Lower EI. We will be studying the natural regions of Europe and investigating a variety of the cultures that render this continent so splendidly diverse. Ms. Rachel will be sharing her personal experience and knowledge of France later in the unit.

Preschool & Kindergarten: Ms. Nadia and Ms. Vendana, Ms. Joey and Ms. Janel, Ms. Tammy and Ms. Melissa

All the children are excited to be back after winter break! In the East room, the children are learning how to care for their teeth using a large model, toothbrush, and real toothpaste! Ms. Nadia's class pet (hermit crab) is very popular and the children love to observe him. In the North room children are learning about a unique flightless bird, the penguin. The West room is exploring life in the ocean through songs, games and art.

All three classrooms are beginning to prepare the children for the 100th day of school.

We had a 100 day celebration last year on this special day that was a BIG HIT with EVERYONE! Even the youngest children are excited with counting their numbers up to this 100th day. Each child will be asked to bring in 100 objects that will be counted by his/herself and other children. Objects should be small enough for them to carry (e.g., Cheerios, match box cars) and all 100 objects should fit in a shoe box or grocery bag). No candy please!

Parent/teacher conference sign-up sheets are up for all the classrooms. Please see the memo that went home for additional information.

Kindergartners are learning their addresses. Please send a photo of the front of your kindergartner's home.

Donations Needed for Preschool/Kindergarten

- **Lazy Lizard Yoga Mats:** Money earned through the TRIP program in Preschool/Kindergarten will be used to purchase yoga mats specifically made for young children. To view the yoga mats designed for this age group visit www.lazylizardsyoga.com. Make sure to place your TRIP order (you can purchase gift cards for the stores you already go to today; even gasoline and groceries). If you would prefer to make a direct donation, simply write a check to the school and note it is for the yoga mats.
- **Reader Parents & Grandparents:** Volunteers are needed to read one-on-one with kindergartners. Please contact Ms. Tammy if you are available and interested.

Shopping and Earn Cash/Credit for our School

- Thank you to all of the families that participated in the BoxTops and on-line shopping program. From the summer collection program we collected over 500 box tops that earned a donation of 5 books to the school, valued at over \$125. Visit www.boxtops4education.com to shop online and the school will earn up to 8% of the purchase.
- Change in the Campbell's program: please bring in the UPC code from the label for school credit.
- Recycle Program: Save your empty ink jet cartridges and old cell phones. Postage paid envelopes are in Miss Stacie's office.
- Remember to also place your Montessori TRIP orders and earn credit for you and the school.

Other Parent Organization Activities Update

- The February **Meet and Eat** will be February, 2nd. Watch for flyers with the details. We express a huge THANK YOU/MERCI to the Plamondon's for a fun December **Meet and Eat**.
- Join us for the next **Family Field Trip** to the Wilmot Mountain Ski and Snowboard Area, WI. on Saturday, February 10th. A flyer was distributed in parent folders and is available on the school website (www.MontessoriBatavia.com). Contact Ronni Verboom via e-mail rverboom@bakermemorialchurch.org or phone 630-584-0441 for questions.
- **Volunteers needed** for the following activities during the remainder of the school year:
 - **Teacher Appreciation Lunch** (April 13th): Support persons needed to help determine menu, prepare food and gifts, and watch children while teachers enjoy this special luncheon.
 - **Campus clean up** (April 21st): A coordinator and support persons to plan and coordinate the campus clean up are needed. The coordinator will facilitate making posters, sign-ups, procuring snacks on the day of and making sure we arrange for parents to bring the right equipment.
 - **Campus Prairie Restoration Project**: We need 3 - 5 parents interested in being on the steering committee. We will work with some local naturalists and experts to develop a plan to restore the prairie along the river behind the school.
 - **Loyalty Day parade** (Parade is May 5th): We need a coordinator and support persons. The coordinator will facilitate what we will do around the parade theme, work with teachers to integrate it in their classroom activities, and work with children to create a "float" (decorate a trailer).
 - **Summer picnic** (June 16th): We need a coordinator and support persons. The coordinator will facilitate identification of a theme, make flyers, and develop a sign up sheet for volunteers and activities.

Contact **Andrea Plamondon** at **630-443-1031** to volunteer.

- The Parent Organization meets the 1st Wednesday of each month at 8:30 a.m. in Ms. Stacie's office. Please join us in working toward creating a stronger community for the children. If you would like to participate but are unable to attend the meetings please contact Andrea Plamondon at 630-443-1031.
- Check the calendar on the website (www.MontessoriBatavia.com) and bulletin boards for more information about ongoing and future events and activities.

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 or 630-906-0569.

Thanks for your continued support!