

Serving the Wyoming Valley for 52 Years!

W.V. Montessori School

FOLLOW THE CHILD

Volume: 7—Issue 2

Spring 2023

A MESSAGE FROM THE HEAD OF SCHOOL

Dear Members of the WVMS School Community,

It seems like only yesterday that we were beginning the 2022–2023 school session and now we are into spring and on the way to the end of another year! This has been a fantastic year as we continue to bounce back from all the problems COVID created. It was so exciting to see our community come together for several activities such as the holiday performances, Parent's Night and Montessori Week, just to mention a few. A special thanks to all of you for your support in so many ways. Whether it was as a classroom helper, special activity committee member, volunteer, or financial supporter, I truly appreciate what you do for our students and staff.

The school year, as it winds down, will close with a whirlwind of activities. On a social note, we have a Spring Gala coming up on May 12 at the Beaumont Inn, which always proves to be a fun event. The Folk Butterfly Farm will be here on April 27 to present a special program and hands-on activities to the students. On Thursday, May 4, we have the Kindergarten Mother's Day Tea which is special in every way. Dates and details for our Spring Chorale, various graduations, and Knoebels Amusement Park outing will follow in the next few weeks.

Finally, I am pleased to announce our Board of Trustees has taken a giant step in approving the construction of a new classroom building in the area where the present media center and swings now stand. The new building will be two-stories high and will give us space for three additional classrooms. This is space we sorely need if we want to continue to grow and provide the exceptional Montessori education our students and future students deserve. Note, there may be some changes in flow into and out of our main building when construction begins in the near future. We anticipate having the new space available for classes in the fall.

I hope you enjoy the final two months of the school year.

Sincerely,



Dennis J. Puhalla

Head of School



TODDLER (18 MONTHS TO 3 YEARS OLD)

By Lynn Benkowski, Toddler A

Toddler A has been learning all about seeds and plants in preparation for spring! We had saved some pumpkin, gourd, and sunflower seeds from our fall works, so we put them in ziploc bags with damp paper towels and watched them sprout. The toddlers learned to identify roots, stems, and leaves. We planted more seeds, including marigolds and forget-me-nots, and noticed the difference in the size and shape of the leaves. The toddlers have been carefully watering the seedlings every day and watching them grow. Soon they will be decorating their own flower pots and transplanting their young plants so they can bring them home! We will also be planting some of our pumpkins, gourds, and sunflowers here at school in hopes that we will have lots to share by next year's Fall Festival!

In addition to plants, we have been talking about birds, animals, and other creatures that hatch from eggs. We learned a BIG word - "oviparous" - from the book "Chickens Aren't the Only Ones" by Ruth Heller! The toddlers have been using hands-on activities to learn that many living things hatch from eggs - not just birds.





PRIMARY (3-6 YEARS OLD)

“We see the figure of the child who stands before us with his arms held open, beckoning humanity to follow.” DR. MARIA MONTESSORI, EDUCATION AND PEACE



By Robyn Fox, Primary A

We in Primary A can't believe it's Spring! It has been a busy year and it swept by so rapidly...A tremendous thank you must go out to all the parents that donated food and supplies for our classroom. We love to do Food Prep Work. This not only supplies us with fantastic nutrients but also contributes to the improvement of our fine motor skills. Some examples of working with the Food Prep Materials are cutting apples; peeling and cutting bananas, cucumbers, and carrots; preparing cheese or jelly with crackers, and twisting and squeezing oranges. Also, this has been a fabulous way for us to practice grace and courtesy as we offer our prepared food to share with other classmates. Preparing and serving these snacks is a natural way for us to learn cooperation and experience community.

Maria Montessori said, “It is necessary that the child teach himself, and then the success is great.” How true this philosophy is as we see it every day in our classroom. We are studying the world through materials that inspire and give us the knowledge that we will use throughout our lives. As young



READING BUDDIES

(PRIMARY & LOWER ELEMENTARY)



We would like to thank Lower Elementary for taking time to visit every Wednesday and for reading all those incredible books to us!

students, we don't necessarily understand this now but eventually it will blossom into our souls.

If you walk into Primary A, you may say, oh wow, this is chaos; however, just ask us if we know our continents, or the different land and water forms, or the planets of our solar system? Oh yes, we do!

Do we know the months of the year, days of the week in English and Spanish? Oh yes, we do!

Do we know how to count to 50 in Spanish? Oh yes, we do!

We are constantly learning because our curriculum is vast and we learn at our own pace and in our own individual way...so to answer the question, what did we learn over the last few months is not so simple!





WINTER FESTIVAL/MONTESSORI WEEK

Celebrating traditions that bring us together and give back to our community!





SPRING SCHOLARSHIP GALA: JOIN US FOR AN EVENING UNDER THE STARS



2023 Gala Committee

This year we are honoring how our WVMS teachers help our students reach for the stars! We invite you to join the celebration and look forward to seeing you there!

You can RSVP, buy raffle tickets and donate online at **[WVMSGala2023.givesmart.com](https://wvmsgala2023.givesmart.com)**.

Join us at the Spring Scholarship Gala, Friday, May 12! The event is an evening for parents/WVMS community to have fun and raise funds for WVMS student scholarships.

No formal wear required! Upscale Casual dress requested (think like a spring wedding guest).

The event features an open bar and a variety of delicious heavy appetizers and desserts.

ALL WVMS parents are encouraged to attend! Get to know parents of your children's classmates and visit with teachers and staff to help build a stronger WVMS community.

There will be a variety of opportunities to contribute to the WVMS Scholarship fund including: silent auction, raffles, and fun items for sale at the event. The silent auction will feature many family-friendly items at an array of price points.

LOWER ELEMENTARY

(6-9 YEARS OLD)

By Kara Taylor, Lower Elementary

The Montessori Math materials provide students with a foundation in mathematics like no other. Lower Elementary students love working on math! Through the lessons and materials created by Maria Montessori, the children gain an in depth knowledge and reap the benefits of the processes presented in the sequence of lessons. In turn, our students have math confidence. Students in Lower Elementary work on the four math operations using the materials for those and geometry, reasoning and algebraic expressions. Maria Montessori took the idea that the human has a mathematical mind from French philosopher Pascal. She said that a mathematical mind was a “sort of mind which is built up with exactity.” It tends to estimate, needs to quantify, to see identity, similarity, difference and patterns to make order and sequence and control of error. The unique math materials that she created and are used in our classrooms reflect all of these components.

Our first year students begin with the long chains that in the Primary classroom provided a work of counting



to large numbers. In the elementary classroom, this work also includes factoring, squaring and cubing of numbers. The snake game allows students to add and subtract long number sentences using the bead bars seen in the long chains up to and including negative numbers. Checkerboard is a work that allows students to multiply numbers into the hundred thousands while using the bead bars that were once a part of the long chains and snake game.

The order of numbers, hierarchical value and place value are uniquely shown within the Montessori math curriculum. Stamp game introduces the color value using green, blue, and red stamps. This use of the three colors is continued throughout the small and large bead frames. All of these math materials allow stu-





dents to add and subtract numbers into the thousands. Large bead frame goes into the millions! Long multiplication uses the same color values as well as the long division test tube material. All of the math materials are used as learning tools for mathematics. The procedures and organization involved in each one provides students with life long skills including attention to detail, patience, following directions, and kinesthetic movement of the materials.

Recent cultural studies that Lower El students focused on were a study of weather, including daily charting and graphing of the high and low temperatures while studying the change of seasons. Building on the effects of weather, students planted seeds for a classroom terrarium. Plants will be studied throughout their growth and development with the hopes of a fruitful harvest. A study of the solar system has moved students from the study of planet earth and its unique life sustaining properties to the study of the universe building on the previous “Big Bang” impressionistic lesson in our history studies. Our students studied Black History and Women in History during the winter months. Through literature and discussion, students enjoy actively learning about the significant changes in our American History and history worldwide. They are able to conduct short bibliography reports based on lessons given and the Montessori three-part card layout works. Finally, students moved from the study of sound in the fall to a study of magnetism. Students have conducted independent studies of magnetism, exploring how the poles create magnetic pull and push.



UPPER ELEMENTARY (9-12 YEARS OLD)

This year the Upper Elementary students are focusing on several types of writing. At this level, the students are expected to write several individual writing pieces based on a sequence of different forms of writing. Some of the writing samples the students have focused on this year include story writing, creative writing, essays and, most recently, a research paper.

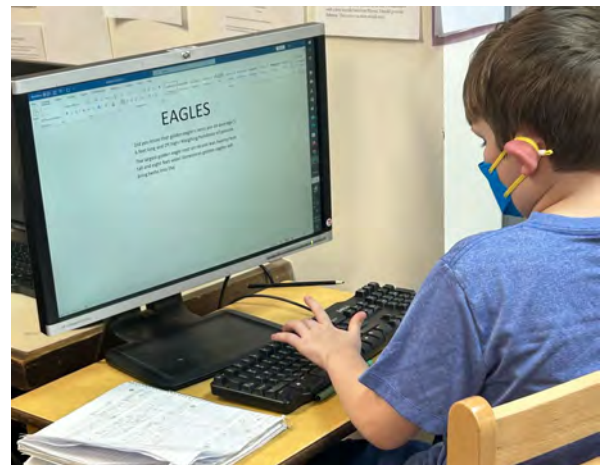
The research paper that the students have been writing is a multi-week assignment. The students began this assignment by choosing a topic of their choice. Some of the topics include Volcanoes, Safety on the Internet, Earthquakes, Golden Eagles and Clouds/Precipitation, just to name a few. Once the student settled on a topic, they began to research

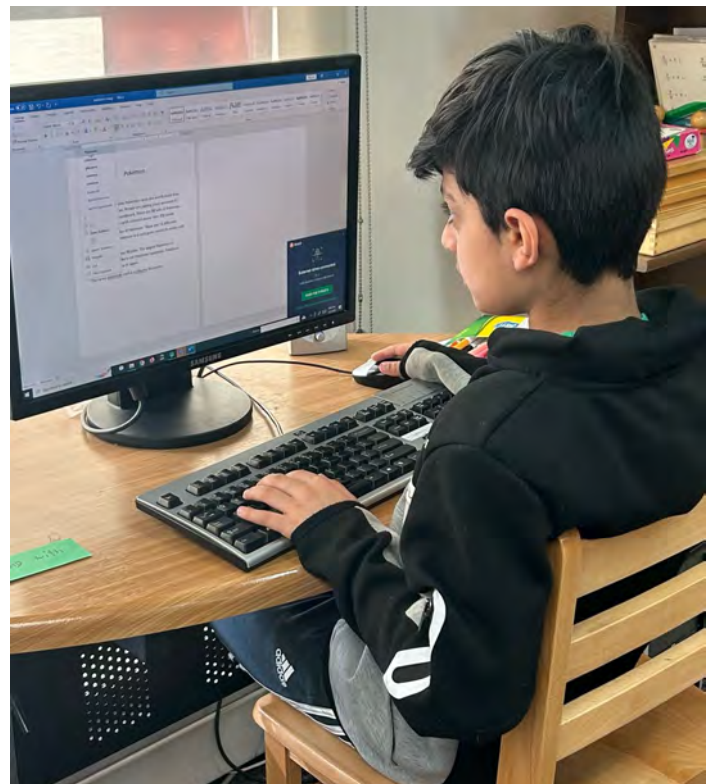


their topics using several different resources. The students then compiled their research to form an outline for their paper. Mrs. Weinschenk worked with the students using their outlines to sort their research into three subtopics to begin writing their rough draft. The paragraphs are split up weekly so the students only focus on two to three paragraphs a week. During this process, we have focused on the importance of a strong introduction paragraph to their paper and a strong conclusion paragraph that sums up all of the important points of their research. The students began with a rough draft on their introduction paragraph, subtopics and conclusion paragraph. The students are currently working on making changes to their rough draft, expanding on their subtopics and their conclusion. Each week the students are given corrections and/or suggestions to

their rough draft paragraphs. At the conclusion of this writing assignment, the students will have a five-paragraph research paper to share with their peers. The final step in their writing process will be typing their final piece using a word processing program.

We feel at the Upper El level it is important for students to know and understand the writing process from rough draft to final draft. This research paper assignment allows the Upper El students to not only research a topic but also to know how to use this research to analyze and organize their information, to construct an introduction, body paragraphs and a conclusion and how to weed out any irrelevant information. We are looking forward to having the students share their research papers in the next few weeks. All of the research papers will be displayed throughout the Upper El classroom upon their completion.







Wyoming Valley Montessori

Spring 2023 Event Calendar

May 4—Mother's Day Kindergarten Tea

May 8-12—Teacher Appreciation Week

May 12—Spring Scholarship Gala

May 26—Early Dismissal

May 29—School Closed—Memorial Day

June 2—6th Year Long Study/3rd Year Capstone Presentations

June 7—Toddler Moving-Up Ceremony

June 8—Kindergarten Moving-Up Ceremony/Primary Chorus Concert

June 9—6th Year Graduation/Chorus Concert

June 12—Last Day of Classes (Early Dismissal)

June 13—WVMS Knoebels Day

