

# Montessori Pathways' News



*" There must be provision for the child to have contact with nature; to understand and appreciate the order, the harmony and the beauty in nature. That the child may better understand and participate in the marvelous things which civilization creates". ~Dr. M. Montessori*

## Exploring Nature

Notes from Ms. Alena

From the very beginning of life, it is vital to maintain the link between child and nature. To achieve this, we need to become aware of the importance of nature in our own lives, only then we will be able to share this wonderful world of miracles with our children.



Think about the natural movement of the leaves as a mobile that will help the child to develop his vision. Think about the music in nature to stimulate the child's sense of hearing - the songs of the birds, the sound of dry leaves when we step on them, or the rain hitting the ground. Close your eyes and recall the smell of the soil after the rain, the perfume of the rose when it starts to open, or the fragrance of basil when you cut a leaf. What a wonderful way to stimulate the sense of smell.

The problem is that in our day, children live an artificial life in our cities, where nature gets restricted to a park, or if you are lucky enough, to a home with a garden, and even that may not provide a healthy interaction with nature. Through this isolation from nature, and through the attitude of the adults, they start to become afraid of nature. Because of all the bad things that can happen - be in rain, cold, heat, become dirty or wet, or the many other natural things - we have lost the ability to enjoy. Sadly, the child gets tired after a short walk, he does not seem interested and does not have enough energy to enjoy nature.

If the child is not able to hear, to see, to touch, he will not be able to love. We can love only that which we know. The young child acquires the knowledge of his surroundings through his senses. That is why in Montessori we say the child is a sensori-

al explorer.

The highlight of this month was the 4-day trip of our Elementary students to Nature's Classroom in Salem, WI. For the fifth time, our students were away from their families for 4 days (3 nights) in a row.

This national program of nature exploration brought to our students such a great experience of going in the path of rediscovery of nature, in the path of rediscovery of the world through their eyes, taking care of themselves and helping each other, learning how to compromise living with roommates, and building a new friendship.

During this trip, our students learned a lot of new facts, built many new skills, tried different new foods suggested by their friends, made a lot of new friends from the other Montessori school, and, the most important part of this trip, they spent most of each day in the forest and on the lake.



They were so busy. Their active day began at 7:45am with serving and having breakfast and ended at 9:00pm for lower elementary and 9:30 pm for upper elementary students with cookies, story reading and slide show. During the whole day, the kids were active outside taking classes of their choice and participating in field groups or large group activities.



The magic environment with quite sunny or rainy weather, a lot of fresh air, peaceful birds' songs, as well as fun, enthusiastic, and respectful staff, brought so much excitement and energy to our kids and to me personally.

Every year our kids are looking forward to going to Nature's Classroom

“Parents are the ultimate role models for children. Every word, movement and action has an effect. No other person or outside force has a greater influence on a child than the parent.”

~Bob Keeshan



## Thank you, Parents!!!



~ April was a fairly busy month for us. One of our very successful events was “Spruce it Up: Doughnuts with Grownups!” The weather was cooperative and our students were eager to help with making our playground safe, nice, clean, and beautiful. ~

~ The kids were so excited to work together with their parents and so proud to have them at school! It took about an hour and half to get all the work done since we had a really great team.



~ The Montessori Pathways team and students would like to extend our appreciation to parents for their tremendous help during the “Spruce it Up: Doughnuts with Grownups!” event. ~



## COMING SCHOOL EVENTS

**in May**

**\*\* Registration for Summer Camp 2023 and the upcoming 2023-2024 School Year is wrapping up! \*\***

Thank you, parents, for returning all re-enrollment applications on time. It helps a lot to prepare our school for the Summer Camp and next school year.

We have just a couple spots left in Primary (3-6 y.o.) level. Now these spots will be filled on a "first come, first served" basis. Therefore, if you or your friends are considering enrolling your / their child to Montessori Pathways, we suggest not waiting until the last minute.

⇒ **May 4 (Th)- Elementary Class Trip to Willow Crystal Lake to see "Great American Tall Tales" performance.**

⇒ **May 8 – 12 (M-F) - National Teacher Appreciation Week**

*"Dear Montessori Pathways teachers, your passionate service have put our children in a position to succeed. The futures you have remodeled can never be altered. I couldn't have asked for a better team in this school, for the love, patience, and passion that you bring to work every day. You make my job easy because you're so wonderful at yours. Your profession deserves to be mentioned and appreciated every day. You are society builders. You are the celebrants of today. Thank you for your selfless service from the bottom of my heart " ~ Ms. Alena Baradzina*

This week is a great chance for our families to pass your warm and kind words to your teachers!



⇒ **May 17, Wednesday (Rain Day—May 19, Friday) - Planting Day / Muffins with Moms!**



Our students brought so much energy and effort helping their dads with spreading the mulch on our playground to make it nice and safe. Thank you, little friends!!!

Now it is time to add the finishing touches to our school's outdoor area and we invite all moms or grandmas to enjoy planting together.

*It would be great if every child could bring at least one plant before Planting Day ( on May 15 (M) or May 16 (Tu)) to have a chance to participate in the creation of the Pathways' Garden.*

Any perennial, annual, or veggie plant would be very helpful and appreciated.

⇒ **May 24 (W) at 2:00pm - Kindergarten Moving On Ceremony.** Parents are welcome to attend.

⇒ **May 25 (Th) at 2:00pm— Graduation Ceremony for 6-grade students.** Parents are welcome to attend.

⇒ **May 26 (F) at 10:30 am—School-wide Final Picnic at Veteran Acres Park.** Everyone is welcome.

⇒ **May 29 (M) - No School (Memorial Day)**

⇒ **The Last Day of School is Wednesday, May 31st.**

⇒ **The school will be closed for Summer Camp preparation June 1st– June 2nd.**

⇒ **The Summer Camp begins Monday, June 5th.**

⇒ **June 5 – August 18 – Summer Camp (11 weeks)**

⇒ **August 21- 23 (M – W) - No Class (2023-2024 School Year Preparation; Parents/ Students Orientation Days)**

⇒ **August 24 (Th) - The first day of 2023-2024 school year (full schedule)**

## NEWS FROM THE ELEMENTARY CLASS



Ms. Bridget

Nature's Classroom was a wonderful class bonding trip as well as an experience to learn new concepts and make new-Montessori friends from the Montessori School of Champaign-Urbana. Ms Alena sent wonderful pictures to all parents with a write-up about daily classes and activities. My favorite part of the trip is seeing how the first graders react to the freedom at NCI: freedom to choose classes, sleeping arrangements, when to shower, what and how much to eat, what to do in their free time and freedom to explore in a beautiful natural environment. It was an amazing trip.

Parent-Teacher Conferences were a good chance for us to touch base and plan for the next year. I enjoy this time to share some successes and areas of growth. Zoom on Good Friday was a bonus as most conferences were attended by both parents!

We finished up our Kindergarten visits this month. The first graders got to work with their friends again as well as show them Nature class at VA. I overheard Charlie, a first grader, telling her kindergarten friend many of our stories that we have experienced on the way to Veteran's Acres. They love to show the ropes and share their excitement of a place they love.

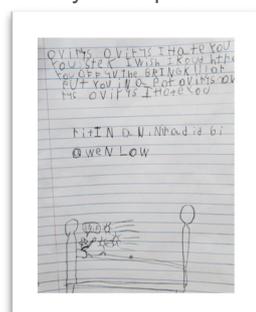


Science demo night is a night to share some chemistry and physics that we have been learning about this year in our class. All the kids picked their demos and presented them to parents in the evening.

April is National Poetry Month. During this month, I recited some of my favorite poems by my favorite poets each day and then on Wednesday writing day, they were able to try their hands at some poetry writing: limericks, acrostic and concrete and Haiku poems. My favorite original composition was written by Owen, a first grader, after hearing Jack Prelutsky's class favorite poem, "Homework, Oh Homework!". He entered the class with a bit of a stuffy nose. We talked about how yucky allergies and colds are. He said, "I know! Virus, Oh Virus. I hate you, you stink." We talked about rhyming and that brink would work. So, I will share with you his poem:

O Virus, O Virus,  
I hate you, you stink.  
I wish I could throw you  
Off the brink  
Or put you in a pot.  
O Virus, O Virus, I hate you

-Written and illustrated by Owen  
Low; 1st grade



The sixth graders have been preparing their reflection speeches for their graduation ceremony on May 25th. I am so impressed with the writing of these sixth graders. I hope many of you will be able to attend so that you will be able to hear them. I am blessed to have been able to teach them for so many years.

A favorite addition to our class is Landon's drawings of the lunch menu items along with his ratings.



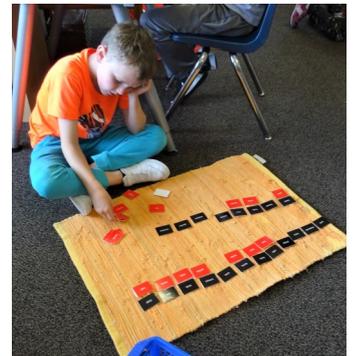
The students love to come into the class and to visually see what is for lunch. The first graders can see the food for the day, which is an exciting part for most kids' day. The other day, we had Philly Cheese Steak Quesadillas, which is a favorite of many. Landon had originally rated it a 4. I asked him why as I also try the food to determine its value. A huge discussion among the kids ensued. Finally, they convinced him to change the rating. So, having learned how to find the mean / average in their Simple Solutions math book, Landon (a fifth grader) and Ana (a sixth grader) began to collect data-scores from all who tried. After adding and dividing, they had a number. However, Donovan (another 6th grader) chimed in, "Let me see the math. I will do the dividing because I have done decimals and can do the math without remainders." It was a fabulous, democratic, real world math lesson that I did not teach!

Finally, I have been seeing a lot of collaborative play at recess. Every Monday, I teach them a new game. For a bit, they continued one of these games, dodgeball, for a long time. Then the NCAA basketball tournament happened and then basketball became the game. Chalk was donated by the Low's so many began to create hopscotch (which we discussed at the library upon seeing the hopscotch rug at the library) and to make castles and alligators. A most unusual game the Upper El created was covid/vaccine ball. I really enjoy watching the many ways that kids make sense of the world and expand on their knowledge at recess.



# APRIL PHOTO GALLERY

## Elementary Class



# APRIL PHOTO GALLERY

## Pre-K and Kindergarten Extended Day Group



## NEWS FROM THE SOUTH ROOM

Ms. Kathy, Ms. Urana



Welcome to the final newsletter of the school year. We are delighted to share some highlights of our exciting and eventful month at Montessori Pathways School with you.

In April, we began the month with a focus on all things fresh and new, as we prepared for spring holidays with eggs, bunnies, and chicks. Our little ones had the opportunity to count eggs and learn about quantities from 1 to 10, while the art area was full of eggs, chicks, and bunnies. We also had parts of a chick and parts of a bunny in the language area.



Moving on from the spring holidays, we refocused and began preparing for Earth Day with great enthusiasm. The children learned about the importance of caring for the environment through various activities, such as raindrop counting, flower counting, sorting spring objects, and a recycling activity.



We also read "10 Things I Can Do to Help My World" by Melanie Walsh and "Our Peaceful Classroom" by Aline Wolf, which taught our children about taking care of the Earth and treating one another with kindness and respect.



April is an exciting time in the classroom as we witness the growth and transformation of the children from the fall. They are working harmoniously, independently, and caring for each other.

In keeping with the Earth Day theme, we were delighted to have our dedicated parents and volunteers beautify our playground by mulching, cleaning, and weeding. Their efforts made our school environment more beautiful and welcoming for our little ones, and we extend our heartfelt gratitude to all those who helped. We will also be finishing our playground beautification project with our yearly planting.



To complete the playground enhancements, we are excited to invite our moms to the "Muffins with Moms" event on May 17th. This is a great opportunity for moms to connect with their children and get to know each other better. We can't wait to see our little ones enjoying the newly beautified playground.

As the school year comes to a close, we want to express our gratitude to each and every one of you for your continued support and trust in our Montessori program. It has been a pleasure watching your children grow and learn this year, and we are excited to continue this journey together in the upcoming school year. We cannot do it without parent support, and we are grateful for all the contributions you have made to our school community.



# APRIL PHOTO GALLERY

## South Room



## NEWS FROM THE EAST ROOM



Ms. Joey, Ms. Carole

We are coming to the end of another wonderful and exciting school year; it has gone by so fast!

During our "Come and Work Together!" Family Night the children really enjoyed sharing their classrooms and presenting the works they know and love. It was so nice to see everyone, thank you for coming.



This month we celebrated Earth Day. We had discussions, read books and sang songs about ways we can all help our planet.

One was about the 3 R's: Recycle, Reuse, and Reduce! We then talked about how to separate various items into categories: bottles, paper, boxes and plastic. The children had many ideas of their own, recycling the paper we do use to save more of our trees, and reusing sponges and cloths to wipe up spills rather than paper towels. Turn off the faucet when we are finished washing our hands, and don't litter, just to name a few.



So, in order to get to know our Earth we should all get outside, spend time in your own back yard. Find a special place where you can sit and listen to the wind and the birds. Dig in the dirt. Turn over rocks and look for cool creatures.



If we spend time in nature, we will know and understand it better. The natural world will matter to us, and we will be more likely to try to protect it.

For an Earth-related craft, the children created beautiful earth windsocks, we hope you enjoy them!



Also thank you families for helping to make our playground beautiful and safe, and sharing a doughnut with us, it is so much fun working together.

As the trees begin to bud and the flowers bloom there has been a lot of discussion in the classroom about spring. We now begin our focus on life cycles and parts of the plant and seed, the flower, the butterfly, the frog, and praying mantis.



To help provide a real experience we are waiting for the arrival of our painted lady caterpillars, we can't wait!

During these last months of school we begin to see changes in the work choices in every age level. They begin to see themselves as capable learners. Children develop a deeper ability to concentrate, focus, organize and independently follow through to completion. It is wonderful to see this type of growth happening in all the children.

Happy Birthday to Jack and Jesse, we enjoyed learning more about you!

Looking forward to "Planting day! Muffins with Mom" event. The children are already talking about it. And then of course our annual picnic.

It has been a month of amazing growth and transformation for all.



# APRIL PHOTO GALLERY

## East Room



# MORE WONDERFUL MOMENTS AT MONTESSORI PATHWAYS



*"... the child always chooses something hard to do. This is something we would never have thought of."  
~Maria Montessori*

