

Montessori Pathways' News



March 2018



These children have free choice all day long. Life is based on choice, so they learn to make their own decisions. They must decide and choose for themselves all the time...They cannot learn through obedience to the commands of another.

~ Maria Montessori

Notes from Ms. Alena

(Head of School)

Kindergarten and Elementary Demo Classes

The Elementary and Kindergarten Demo Classes were the most exciting part of March. Parents were able to get an idea of what the daily work cycle is like. Unfortunately, it is impossible to demonstrate all of the amazing and miraculous moments that we, teachers, can observe every day during just one hour. However, parents still witnessed the enthusiastic and hard work that the kids demonstrated even during the late evening.



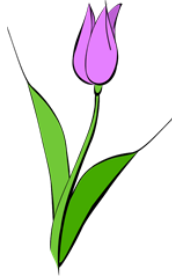
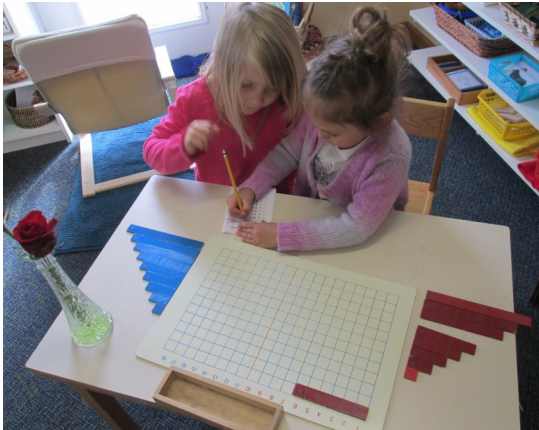
We would like to extend our appreciation to all of our teachers, students, and parents who contributed their time, energy, and enthusiasm in preparation of, and participation in, our annual Demo Classes!





~ Kindergarten Visit Days for Pre-K Students ~

~ Elementary Visit Days for Kindergarten Students ~

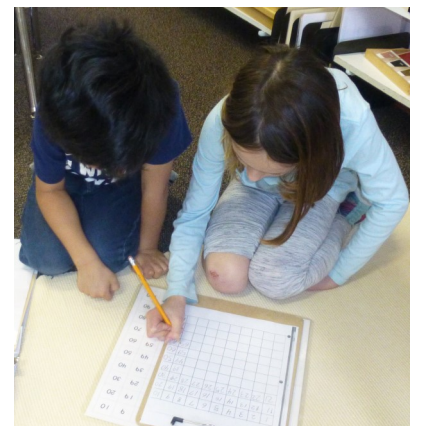
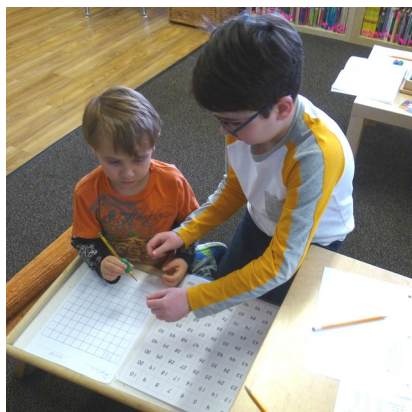


During two weeks in February-March, our Pre-K students were visiting the Kindergarten Extended Day Class. At the same time, the kindergarten students were invited to spend a day in the Elementary classroom.

It was interesting to observe growing leadership maturity in the Elementary class when the Elementary students were able to demonstrate their ability to make a presentation and help with work to their kindergarten friends, while successfully working with their own materials according to their work plan.



It was a very exciting experience for our students. Although sometimes nervous in the beginning, all of the Pre-K and K students were very proud to be a part of their older friends' group, noticing a very welcoming and helpful atmosphere in the classroom.



Registration for the upcoming 2018-2019 school year is in full swing!

It is that time of the year when we begin assembling the classes for the next year. We also begin to plan our staff and curriculum for the upcoming school year.

Thank you to all of the families who have returned the re-enrollment application for the Summer Camp and the next School Year.

Considering that the value of and interest to Montessori Education and to Montessori Pathways School particularly continues to rise, spots at our school are filling up pretty quickly this year.

Therefore, we would like to remind you of the importance of **re-enrolling by April 15th** rather than waiting until the last minute.

If you have decided to continue your child's education at Montessori Pathways, please

- 1) Complete the Registration Form for Summer Camp and / or Re-Enrollment Form for the 2018-2019 School Year
- 2) Attach the Summer Camp registration (\$30) and/or School Year Re-enrollment Fee (\$50)
- 3) Include the 10% of annual tuition security deposit
- 4) **Return the paperwork along with payment no later than April 15, 2018.**

By submitting your 10% of the annual tuition deposit on time, you secure your child's spot at our school for the next school year, can lock in your child's current classroom, and any other special schedules and arrangements made with the school.

*All families enrolling and submitting 10% of the tuition **after April 15th** will be considered "newly enrolled" families, and will be subject to a new enrollment fee of \$50.00 for Summer camp and \$100.00 for 2018-2019 School Year.*

Spots in each age level are already limited and cannot be guaranteed - "newly enrolled" families will be enrolled on a first come, first serve basis. Classroom and any other preferences will also be up to administrative discretion based on availability.

Please do not wait until the last minute and help us and your family be successfully prepared for the Summer Camp 2018 and 2018-2019 School Year on time.



Self-esteem is the Foundation Principle of Success and Happiness.

"Nothing can stop the man with the right mental attitude from achieving his goal; nothing on Earth can help the man with the wrong mental attitude."

— Thomas Jefferson

Self-esteem is not a skill, but a characteristic, that needs stimulation to develop. Feeling good about oneself, isn't that the most important ingredient for a happy and productive life? **People who feel good and are proud of themselves achieve a lot!**

To name just a few related personal characteristics:

- Enthusiasm instead of detachment
- Joy instead of boredom
- Positive energy instead of apathy
- Contentment instead of jealousy
- Receptiveness to new things instead of aversion
- Readiness to contribute instead of feeling entitled

Montessori education has the development of a good self-esteem as a core aim. All other positive characteristics will follow. A child with a good self-image does not need competition to excel. They remain respectful of others, and at the same time exceed their own expectations!

To assist the development of a positive self-image:

- The teachers are in tune with the child's basic characteristics and learning styles
- There is an environment with multi-age ranges and therefore multi-levels
- Children are given opportunities to choose, to make decisions and to make mistakes
- Age-appropriate limits are set which give the message that your freedom ends where someone else's freedom begins
- Development of self-discipline, self-will and self-direction are nurtured,
- Age-appropriate independence is encouraged which grows competence and consequently self-confidence
- Opportunities for being productive and responsible members of the group are brought forward
- **Respect and trust** are the focal point of the relationship between the student and teacher

COMING SCHOOL EVENTS

Montessori Pathways

- ⇒ **April 2 (M) – Class Resumes**
- ⇒ **April 9 - 12 (M - Th) - Elementary Class 4-day Trip to Nature's Classroom in Lake Geneva, WI**
- ⇒ **April 13 (F) – Elementary Parent / Teacher Conference Day**
 - No School for School Day Elementary students
 - Child care is provided for Extended School Day (7:45am-4:15pm) / All Day (6:45am-6:00pm) Elementary students
- ⇒ **April 16 – 20 (M - F) - Earth Week**
- ⇒ **April 18 (W); Rain Day – April 20 (F) at 9:00am– Spruce It Up! Doughnuts with Dad!**
Work with Dad and enjoy doughnuts together!
- ⇒ **April 19 (Th) at 5:30-7:00pm – Montessori Family Night “Come and Work Together!” –**
Parent / Child Work Cycle in Primary Classes (East and South rooms)

Don't miss this very enjoyable evening working with your child in their special environment. When you arrive, you'll go to your child's classroom and experience with them a little of what their day is like. See what's changed in their day since the first Parent/Child Night!
- ⇒ **April 20 (F) - Elementary Class Trip to Crystal Lake Library for Research Project**
- ⇒ **April 27 (F) – School-Wide Field Trip to Marriott Theatre in Lincolnshire for “The Emperor's New Clothes” Musical**

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- ⇒ **May 2 (W); Rain Day – May 4 (F) at 9:00am – Planting Day! Muffins with Mom!**

It would be great if every child could bring at least one plant on Monday, April 30 or Tuesday, May 1 to have a chance to participate in the creation of the Pathways' Garden.
- ⇒ **May 7 – May 11 – National Teacher Appreciation Week**



NEWS FROM THE ELEMENTARY CLASS

Ms. Amber



We especially need imagination in science. It is not all mathematics, nor all logic, but it is somewhat beauty and poetry.

—Maria Montessori—

The period from the end of February through March brought many new lessons and learning opportunities. We started by mentoring the kindergarten students, two each day, over two weeks' time. It was a rich experience for elementary students to guide, teach, lead, and even learn from those who are younger than them!

Then many students participated in Demo Night and showed parents how they navigate a "day" in the classroom.

We had an educational insight into the challenges of civil rights as we watched the inspirational Raue Theater performance of *The Freedom Riders*. Our students not only enjoyed being the lone group in the audience, but also asked some great questions that the performers answered at the end of the musical.

The most beautiful thing we can experience is the mysterious. It is the source of all true art and science.

—Albert Einstein—

Science exploration was in the plans for March as well. We experimented with apples turning brown, floating and sinking oranges, gravity and motion, and we forced some stems to flower in our sunny window. Our second off-campus excursion of the month took us to Rockford's Discovery Center for a planetarium visit and a class on light and color. It was a fun trip and a great prelude to our Science Day.

On Science Day, students shared some truly impressive and creative experiments or projects from home. They had time to try, observe, or conduct experiments, then present them to the Early Childhood classes and later to parents.

What a fantastic day of discovery! We acknowledged the 30th anniversary of Pi (Π) Day and Albert Einstein's birthday by listening to a beautiful piano version of the pi number sequence and seeing a funny 'picycle' video.



Our last trip of the month to the library was spent doing final research on Asia and research of rainforests.



Other highlights of the past month include students who have:

- * become emergent readers and are now working on consonant blends and long vowel sounds, which will allow them to transition into Level One books
- * completed cursive practice and are now attempting to use cursive in all their language work
- * mastered addition and subtraction facts
- * challenged themselves to complete their daily assignments and then do even more work

Now in process are studies including: the character trait of trustworthiness, echinoderms, vertebrates, leaves and flowers, botany experiments, comparing human needs over different historical time periods, ancient civilizations, cubing, word problems, 2-digit divisor division, multiplication with 2-digit multipliers, and so much more. All students are now working on dynamic addition and dynamic subtraction.

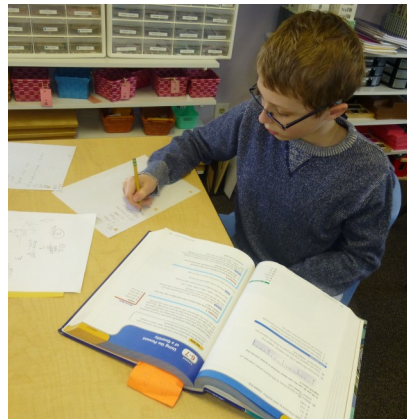
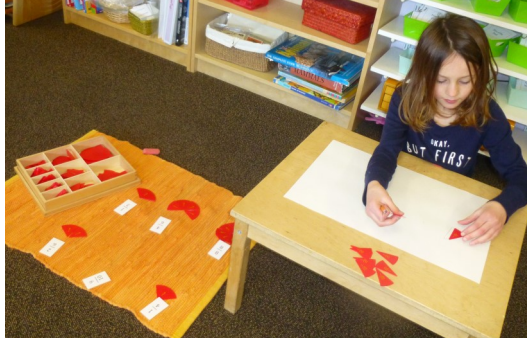
Upcoming events include our four-day all-class field trip to Nature's Classroom followed by Friday, April 13th Parent-Teacher Conferences. It will be exciting to share your student's progress with his/her goal(s). Several students have already met their goal!

The child who concentrates is immensely happy.

—Maria Montessori—

MARCH PHOTO GALLERY

Elementary Class



NEWS FROM THE KINDERGARTEN

Ms. Karen



For a short month, there has certainly been a lot of activity! "Moving on" week began in February and continued into March. The Kindergarteners seemed to really enjoy their time in the elementary with the "big kids". Since "big kids" is a relative term, the kindergarteners also enjoyed being the "big kids" by hosting the younger children for a visit in the kindergarten class!

We have finished up conferences and, as always, it has been a pleasure meeting with you. Conferences allow us to understand your child and your family in more depth.

Work of the month: there really has been a run on the division and multiplication boards. They compliment each other since those are inverse operations. The multiplication board is usually introduced first. It works like this: there is a square board with indentations to hold beads. There are 10 rows across and 10 rows down (so it is also connected to the 100 board). We choose a particular amount of beads to be in a set, keeping that number a constant. Across the top of the board and numbers 1 - 10. So that will tell us how many sets of our constant number we will put on the board. So, we are creating the multiplication tables. Example: sets of 3 beads: $3 \times 1 =$, add another set of 3 beads: $3 \times 2 =$, add another set of 3 beads: $3 \times 3 =$ etc. It is an excellent way to show the function of multiplication. Also it shows the pattern of a square for any number multiplied by itself. Using the multiplication board allows children to literally create the multiplication tables for a chosen number. It helps, not only to memorize, but to see patterns and to understand the process. No wonder it is such a popular material. It is also related to the squaring chains of the bead cabinet.



An artwork just introduced is the making of 3-D "sculptures using colored strips of paper and folding them: either in a zig-zag pattern or in a spiral. These are mounted in a variety of ways on a sturdy colored cardboard base. Vocabulary introduced includes: spiral, precision, base, create, accordion, 3 dimensional. After they are glued to the base, they really are quite striking and certainly fun to make.

The first day of spring (also the equinox) allowed us to talk about the pattern of the seasonal cycles. Seeing patterns/cycles is fundamental in so many learning situations whether we are talking math, music, science, study of nature. It is a recurring theme because that is the structure of things. In the near future, for example, we will talk about the cycle of the monarch. We will also be learning about time. That, of course, allows recognizing the pattern of our days and nights.

This past week, we had an activity in estimating and the difference between counting and estimating. The children were so involved. They loved "guessing" (estimating) and then counting for a precise answer and seeing how close they came. We will be repeating this kind of activity, but with different materials, over the next few weeks.

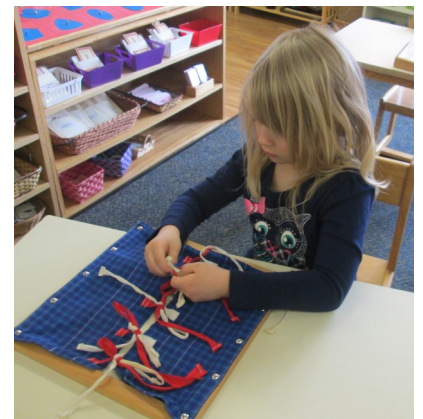
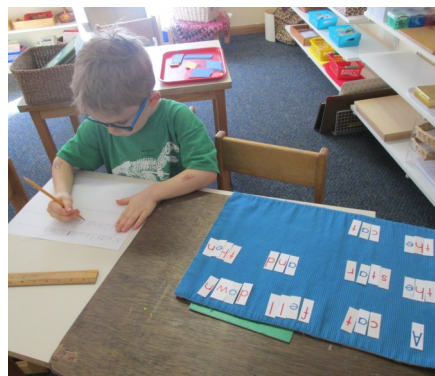
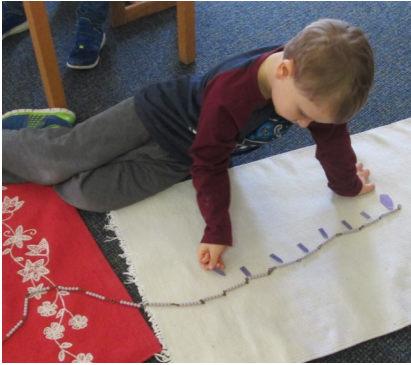


Finally, we held a voting activity in the classroom complete with ballots and a ballot box. The purpose was to experience a real vote, how it works, count up the ballots, etc. And, also to realize that we will all accept the outcome of the vote total, even if you voted for an option that did not "win" It was a fun way to experience a real life activity that is important in our way of government. Everyone who voted received an "I voted" sticker compliments of the precinct people where I voted on Tuesday. At any rate, our ballot options were: a popcorn party or an extra play period outdoors. Popcorn won overwhelmingly. So, Friday, we made and enjoyed popcorn combined with a special story time.



MARCH PHOTO GALLERY

Kindergarten Extended Day Class



NEWS FROM THE SOUTH ROOM

Ms. Andrea, Ms. Urana



Thank you all for making the time to attend spring parent-teacher conferences. It's always nice to have the opportunity to explain all the wonderful things your children are working on in the classroom. Since we focus more on process and not product, we realize you do not always get a clear picture of what your child does at school all day, so it's nice to have that time to go into further detail with you and to elaborate on exactly where your child is at in their learning process.



Their social-emotional growth is also a priority for us and we enjoy telling you all about their friendships and relaying anecdotal stories of their interactions within the classroom and among their classmates. This is the time of the school year in which all the community building begins to show in the kind ways in which the children take care of one another and help their friends whenever possible. The other day I observed one such moment when one child was having difficulty zipping his new coat and another child passed by on the way to the bathroom. The first child simply asked for help and the second child didn't even hesitate, she just stopped and helped. It was so natural to both of them and it was so nice to witness this simple yet heart-warming exchange of kindness and caring.



This month started off with a celebration of Dr. Seuss and his many literary contributions. We had an amazing response to our invitation for family members to visit our classroom and to read a favorite Dr. Seuss book.

The children loved having their loved ones in the classroom and always enjoy being read to. We heard some well-

Thank you to Jenny, Amanda, Colleen, Leslie, Grandma Lulu and Grandpa John, Nicole, Mary, Andy, and Kristina for taking the time to read a story to the class!

known classics as well as some brand new stories.

Each story gave an opportunity to discuss different elements in the book and some even provided ideas for extension discussions and activities; so thank you again for your time.

In the art area, we added a *Cat in the Hat* craft in which the children cut and glued strips of black paper (for whiskers) onto a popsicle stick along with a red pom-pom (for the nose) to create a *Cat in the Hat* nose. We also reused toilet paper rolls to make mini *Cat in the Hat* hats by covering them with alternating red and white strips of paper. For snack we also had two different Dr. Seuss inspired treats: one day, we made *Cat in the Hat* fruit stacks made of alternating slices of strawberries and bananas on top of half of a white Oreo, meant to look like the cat's hat, and another day we had multi-colored goldfish crackers to go along with *One Fish Two Fish Red Fish Blue Fish*. It was a very fun week.



Academically, this month there has not been a trend as far as a lot of the children wanting to work on the same thing. Basically the children are getting to all the areas of the classroom and exploring with new works as well as returning to familiar works and trying them in new ways. A lot of our older children are very interested in the math chains and skip counting. While the younger children have been beginning to show interest in maps.

There has also been a shift to more partner and cooperative work, and this is the time of year where the children are more successful working together because they have had several months to get to know each other well in addition to feeling confident in their choices.



We hope everyone has a relaxing and fun spring break. We look forward to the last two months of this school year and have a lot of exciting things planned.

MARCH PHOTO GALLERY

South Room



PHOTO GALLERY FROM THE PRE-K
EXTENDED DAY

Ms. Andrea



NEWS FROM THE EAST ROOM

Ms. Carole, Ms. Christine



This time of year is busy and productive.

While we all wait for warmer weather and new spring growth to appear our children are experiencing new growth of their own.

- * "I want to do challenging works!!"
- * "These are 1000 cubes," a kindergarten student to a four year old.
- * "Oh, I can help him do that!" a younger child needing help.
- * "I want to do what he is doing"



Our younger children are inspired watching the older children work with their materials. This in turn creates an invitation for the older children to step into leadership roles. We have observed this happening as older children present works to their younger friends. Grading Color Box III, naming the Geometric Solids and counting quantities of Ten Bars and 1000 Cubes are just a few examples. Children led presentations are twofold. For the young child it sparks a curiosity and excitement of their own growth, especially if a "big kid" shows them. Giving presentations also helps an older child master and internalize the work itself along with building confidence as a leader. Oh, the beauty of a multi-age classroom :)



Children are growing and managing their daily routines nicely. However, review is always helpful with creating and keeping a kind caring environment. We have spent some time at the end of our day revisiting Grace and Courtesy lessons given earlier in the year.

The aim of these lessons: to help children build social skills within their surroundings.

- ◇ *Grace and courtesy lessons give the child vocabulary, actions and steps to build his awareness of those around him.*
- ◇ *When given correct words, movements and steps children are given the tools to help make life more pleasant for them and others in the environment.*
- ◇ *Lessons are given in group setting which allows each child have a clear understanding as well as a place to practice with others in the environment.*

The lessons discussed and practiced were: carrying sharp objects safely, coming to a group story, choosing works, walking around rugs, washing hands, coughing into your elbow and coming to community at the end of the day.

Through role playing, new lessons will gradually be introduced when we return from spring break.

As a class we will learn and practice: how to help set up lunch plus manners and etiquette, how to greet a visitor, saying "thank you", use of "excuse me", offering help to another, expressing admiration and introducing the "Silence Board". The Silence Board is useful when the classroom becomes too chatty and disrupts children's concentration. One side has a serene picture while the other side the word "silence". The picture is present most of the time, but when the word silence is observed it means, "Quiet your voices please".



"Little by little children become aware of forming a community.....children no longer act thoughtlessly, but put the group first and try to succeed for its benefit"

~ Maria Montessori, The Absorbent Mind.

We hope to bring a deeper awareness of each child's unique ability to offer kindness and gentleness to those around them.

MARCH PHOTO GALLERY

East Room



NEWS FROM THE LATE AFTERNOON

Ms. Donna



March began with reading lots of Dr. Seuss books. We then learned more about Saint Patrick's Day. Green represents Ireland or the Emerald Isle. According to legend, green also has the magical power to make people invisible to leprechauns or other fairy creatures. That means that wearing green can save you from getting pinched by a leprechaun on St. Patrick's Day. Lots of people eat corn beef and cabbage on St. Patrick's Day.

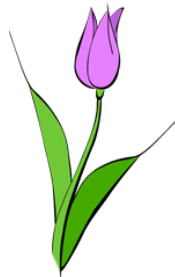
Science:

Place 2 pennies at the edge of a table. At the same moment, flick one outward and let the other fall directly to the floor. Which one hits first?

We discovered another rule of gravity. Forward motion has no effect on the downward pull of gravity. While one penny flies forward and the other drops directly down, gravity pulls both to the floor at the same speed.

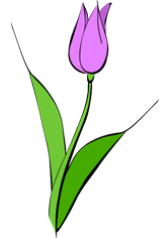
Art:

- Made pictures of Thing 1 and Thing 2
- Made socks after reading "Fox in Socks" by Dr. Seuss
- Traced a large shamrock and colored it
- Shamrock sheets to color
- Shamrock using 3 green hearts for petals
- Leprechaun face
- Hanging leprechaun with an orange beard
- Hanging rainbow
- Unicorns flying on a paper plate
- Rabbit out of newspaper
- Easter Egg made by placing dots of paint on card stock and then scraping off the paint. When dry we cut it into an egg shape



Games:

- 5 Little Shamrocks
- Collect a shamrock (when you land on a shamrock playing our leprechaun board game)
- Checkers
- Spoons
- Garabage



Acting:

Made costumes out of scrap paper and scotch tape then present different plays.



Language:

After reading the "Foot" book by Dr. Seuss we made a book about opposites



MARCH PHOTO GALLERY

More Wonderful Moments at Pathways

