

# Montessori Pathways' News

Montessori Pathways

The best way to discovery!



School

## November

### Notes from Ms. Alena (Head of School)

I believe that November is a month that not only begins the holiday season, but also brings the spirit of giving and sharing. Following the Montessori approach, we at Montessori Pathways would like to teach our students the importance of sharing, giving, and helping, which will let them continue to be proud citizens of a country that is ready to help people around the world in any difficult situation.

### Annual Community Harvest

**"You can give without loving, but you can never love without giving."**

~ Robert Louis Steven-

We concluded November with a **Giving with Gratitude Week**, when kids and their families were able to donate food and other items to the 30th Annual Community Harvest, which will benefit clients of the Crystal Lake Food Pantry. Together we collected and donated **450 pounds** of food and other items.



It was a great chance to teach our students not only the importance of giving thanks for what they get, but also the importance of giving.



**"Children must grow not only in the body but in the spirit, and the mother longs to follow the mysterious spiritual journey of the beloved one who tomorrow will be the intelligent, divine creation, man."**

~ Maria Montessori

### Kids are Helping Kids



The children help to form a community in the classroom. Within that community, each child is an important and contributing member. He is responsible for taking care of the environment as well as the other members of the community (both the teachers and his friends).

Through the grace and courtesy lessons, we demonstrate the type of assistance that may be needed in the classroom. We may ask a child to help with a task or to lend a hand to a friend. But often times, the children step up on their own to provide help when they see it is needed. We observe that the help the children provide each other is just the right amount...not taking over and not offering too little.

Of course, help is not always academic or work related. Help can be in caring for each other or the environment. Spills happen regularly in the classroom. As the children all know that the classroom environment belongs to them, they know they are responsible for caring for it. After a large spill, we may witness other children coming to give a hand to the child cleaning up his work.

If a child is upset or needing some company, the children observe this and act accordingly. They are observant in the child's needs...does he need space and alone time, does he need a hug or smile, does he need an invitation to do work. As the children are learning how to show compassion to a friend, we may also offer suggestions on what type of help they need.

**[Click here to see more: "Kids are Helping Kids"](#)**

## Thank you from the heart

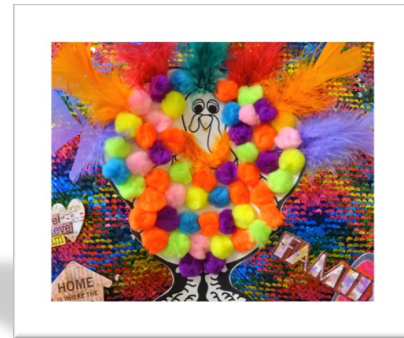


- ◆ Thank you, parents, for all of your help, support, and participation in the kids' learning process, and for giving your kids a chance to feel the Thanksgiving spirit!
- ◆ Thank you to our Elementary students for helping to load the donated items for the Crystal Lake Food Pantry!
- ◆ Thank you, Mary Nelson, Charlie's mom, and Jackie Radeni, Faye's mom, for helping us deliver all donated items for the Community Harvest to the Crystal Lake Food Pantry.

## Disguised Turkey Family Project

We hope that most of our families spent some wonderful family time working on the "Disguised Turkey" project together. We, at Pathways, were awaiting for more and more "new friends" to come to us every day. The kids and teachers were very amazed by your creativity. We met so many different characters from "bag of popcorn" to Santa, from princesses and knights to man in black or race car drivers, from "family spirit" to Statue of Liberty. All of them were made with love and excitement. You should see how happy your kids were when their friends noticed and enjoyed their disguised turkey. Thank you very much for your family time and creativity that brought the Thanksgiving spirit to our school.

[Click here to see all of your disguised turkeys.](#)



## Parents' Corner



### A Montessori Approach to Discipline

There is a common misconception that Montessori children are allowed to do whatever they like. And another that Montessori is very strict.

In reality, Montessori falls in the middle of these two extremes. The word discipline doesn't mean to punish. It is actually based on the root word "disciple" which means "to teach" or "to learn."

So I like to say instead of getting angry and punishing a child if they do something like hitting or biting another child, we can see it as an opportunity for us to teach and the child to learn about caring for others.

#### Here are 8 tips for a Montessori approach to discipline:

- ◆ *Not using bribes and rewards or punishment*
- ◆ *Respectful communication*
- ◆ *Model / assist child to make amends*
- ◆ *Find ways to solve problems together*

- ◆ *Help child if they are having a hard time*
- ◆ *Freedom within limits*
- ◆ *Translate for them*
- ◆ *Kind and clear limits*

[..... Click here to read the whole article.....](#)

*"To let the child do as he likes when he has not yet developed any powers of control, is to betray the idea of freedom ... Real freedom, instead, is a consequence of development; it is the development of latent guides, aided by education."*

*—"The Absorbent Mind", Dr. Maria Montessori*



## COMING SCHOOL'S EVENTS



**in December / January**

◆ **Dec. 1—Dec. 21 — Toys for Tots**

It is with great joy that the Crystal Lake Police Department will be continuing their tradition of participating in **Toys for Tots**. You can drop off as many toys as you'd like in the drop box located in their lobby (**100 W Woodstock St, Crystal Lake**).

Toys donated go to children in McHenry County. This year has taken a lot from all of us, but it won't take the joy of giving. Thanks to your help, this drive is a huge success every year! Last year CL Police Department collected 1000 toys that were distributed to children within McHenry County. This year, let's beat that number!



**[#toysfortots](#) [#CrystalLakeCares](#)**

◆ **December 16 (W)— Celebrating Winter: Winter Holidays Activity Day for Primary Classes**

◆ **December 18 (F) - Celebrating Winter: Winter Holidays Activity Day for Elementary Class**

Unfortunately, this year we are not able to invite our families and celebrate Winter together. However, if you have any great ideas how to bring a Holiday Spirit to our kids, feel free to share them with your teachers via email. The teachers will be happy to collect all of the ideas and organize the winter fun day for your children.

◆ **December 21 (M) - January 1(F) - No school; Winter Break**

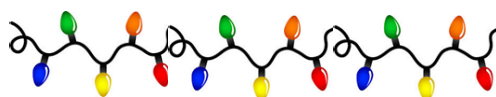
◆ **January 4 (M) - School resumes**

◆ **January 15 (F) - ELEMENTARY Parent / Teacher Conference Day (Virtual)**

No school for Elementary Students on Conference Day

◆ **January 18 (M) - No School (Martin Luther King JR. Day)**

◆ **January 15—31 - Returning Families Preferred Re-Enrollment Period**





## NEWS FROM THE ELEMENTARY CLASS



Ms. Bridget

November has brought new discoveries and growth in a few areas.

### ACADEMICS

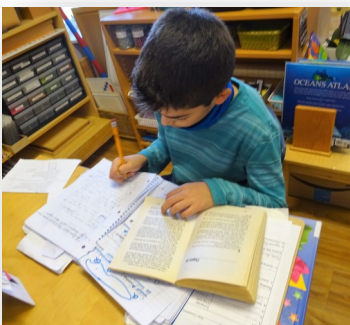
There are many buzz words and phrases the Montessori teachers use often. It is sometimes hard to explain the terms without showing examples of these and telling stories about observations of these key parts to the Montessori child. This month, there are 2 that I want to share: the **prepared environment** and the importance of **the three-year cycle**.

In the fall, Montessori teachers enter their classrooms and plan for their students. Questions flood our minds....How should I organize materials to visually stimulate further exploration? Where should I put items to make it easily accessible to all children and encourage independence? Where would I want to set up my work in the class? These are just a few.

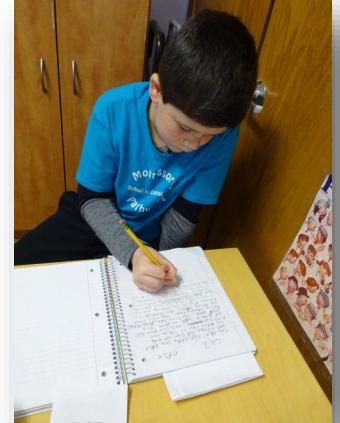


One way I prepare the environment to create excitement is on our reading shelf. Weekly, I bring in new books. These are gathered from the library and put in a special location in the room. How I choose the books vary. Some are from recommendations that I get from the librarians, websites or award winners. Some are selected by students who write a book request. They record the book title and their name and then I order them from the library. Some books are part of a series that kids have latched onto.... right now it is The Bad Guy series. Finally, I might choose a book I have previously read aloud.

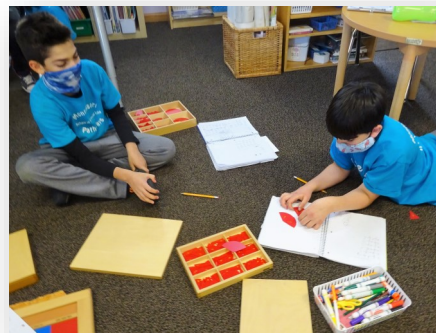
Then, I prepare a half hour of uninterrupted reading each day except for Friday. When I began doing this, it took some time for many to create the stamina to sit with a book, or books, for that long. As the year progresses, you can hear a pin drop during this time. I read, they read. Once this occurs, storytelling explodes. Vocabularies increase. Passions flare.



Writing changes. Once a week, I give a writing lesson and then allow students the time to write. I give them about 15 minutes to write and then increase the time as we journey into our year. We are now at 25 minutes. I write too. Then I allow anyone who desires to share their current writing to do so. This past week, for the first time ever, everyone wrote and then shared. Everyone. And, they wrote a substantial amount. It was fun and engaging.



Finally, the 3-year cycle is the reason why I will never return to traditional education. Not only is it great for the kids: less time reacclimating to a new year, teacher, system, philosophy and rules, but it is great for the students and me to track and celebrate growth. To see growth in one year is possible. But to have the kids SEE their growth in all areas, one needs to be observing it with them over time.



Maria Montessori and other child philosopher/educators noticed this three-year time - period where kids are being exposed, cruising and mastering knowledge and social/emotional growth. Students recognize this in their academic and behavior changes. They sense it and I am able to validate it along with their peers.





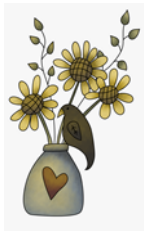
# NEWS FROM THE ELEMENTARY CLASS



## Ms. Bridget

### SPECIALS

**Art:** As I shared with you, **Origami** has been the new excitement. I gave a presentation on the story of Origami and then gave them some paper and a dog to try. All were successful as it was a fairly simple creation. I then showed them books from the library on Origami. Students began to doing Origami as soon as they got to school. Some borrowed the books to take home. The Martin family donated colorful paper for Origami that the kids have been using. Most are displayed in our window. I will be sending them home this week.



Our other **“Draw an Animal”** project was to cut out an animal from a magazine. Then they cut the animal in half through the face. Then they glued the piece onto a paper and drew the part that they cut off. The kids were impressed with their results. We will finish it this week and then they will be hung in the hall for a picture.



We have had lessons on the parts of the root and types of roots. At the park, we have observed roots: how they grow, where they grow, and we have pulled up a couple of roots to see a tap root vs a vesiculated root.



This past week, each group had a jar (thanks Perez/Torres family for the donation) to collect soil from 4 different areas of the field at Veteran’s Acres. They brought them back to school. We observed the difference by touch and sight. We then added water to continue to observe what is in the soil. This will lead to what is in our soil that makes it such a great place for roots to grow.



**Music:** We began recently listening to recordings to familiarize the students with different instruments. One of the favorites sounds they enjoyed was the sound from the didgeridoo. We also heard percussion, strings and wind instruments from around the world. We will continue to explore instruments in December.

**PE:** We finished yoga and are now learning exercises for physical fitness: cardio and strength training. We will do a mixture of walking and running as well as exercises to strengthen our cores.

**Nature:** Following our botany curriculum, we finished leaves and are now exploring roots.



### ADOPT-A-FARMER:

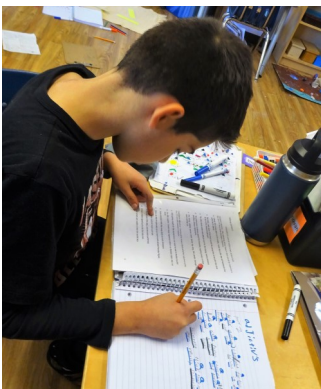
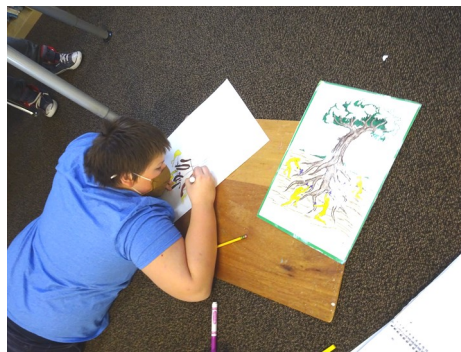
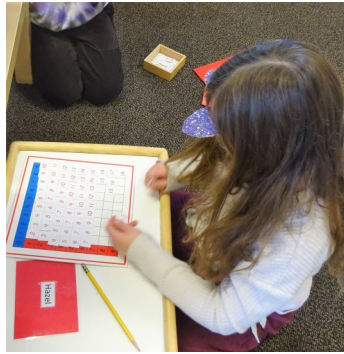
Due to COVID, we have not received many of the cool books and lessons from our farmer, Dana White. However, Illinois Agriculture in the Classroom has had a few opportunities that we have taken a part of. First, we virtually met author of “Time For Cranberries” Lisl Detlefsen. She spoke about this book as well as her others and answered our questions. After this presentation, we received a note from the organizer with 2 books for future author visits! We also, ordered her other books from the library.

This past week, we took a virtual tour of a dairy farm. It was interesting and once again, we were able to interact with the farmer. Fun fact: It takes about 48 hours for your milk to go from farm to table. WOW!



# NOVEMBER PHOTO GALLERY

## Elementary Class





# NEWS FROM PRE-K AND KINDERGARTEN EXTENDED DAY



Ms. Joey, Ms. Kathy

The Pre-K and Kindergarten children have been learning about the native Americans, and found that there were many tribes or nations that lived in different regions of North America. They had great respect for our mother earth and all depended on nature for food and shelter, where they lived, shaped the way they lived, and each group develop different customs and ways of life.

We began first by exploring the North eastern region, then the Southeastern region, Southwestern region, the plains the Basin, Plateau, California and the North western coastal area. As the children traced and pin poked out each region of their map we discussed the people and their customs and the dwellings that they lived in.

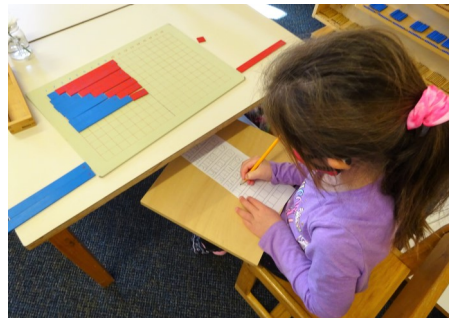
The children we're very enthusiastic and had fun making their own canoes, teepees, dream catchers, and peace, or talking sticks. It is so wonderful to learn about our world's different cultures, one of the children said; "When I grow up, I am going to be a Native American!" Please ask your child to share something new that they've learned.





# NOVEMBER PHOTO GALLERY

## Pre-K and Kindergarten Extended Day Group





## NEWS FROM THE SOUTH ROOM

Ms. Kathy, Ms. Urana



Another month has come and gone. November in the South room was terribly busy and exciting. Thank You to all for attending your conferences online. We had 100 % virtual attendance. Please remember you may always call or email if any new concerns arise or to update us on your child.

Giving with Gratitude week was a success. The children were excited to have contributed to the Crystal Lake food pantry. Thank You again for your very generous contributions.

We began November with Charlie Carroll's 6<sup>th</sup> birthday celebration. Wow. Charlie is the oldest in our room and is extremely helpful with the younger children. We also added a new friend to our room, Jaxon. Welcome, Jaxon!

The room has been buzzing with energy and enthusiasm. The art Area has pumpkin Q-tip painting (great for fine motor skills), autumn stamping, and turkey making. Look for these crafty creations to come home.



The older children have been busy with Sensorial Extensions such as the red and red and blue rod pyramids.



In Math the children have seasonal objects acorns, pumpkins, and dollops of whipped cream pie slices to match to numerals to match with the quantities of numerals 1- 10. I will have the pie with 10 dollops of whipped cream please!

Our classroom has more older children this year and in turn we are seeing more advanced Math being done daily. The kindergarten children all have Addition booklets to work on with the bead materials. The goal is gain memorization of facts through repetition and hand on experience with the materials.

A few children have begun exploring multiplication using the beads and the multiplication board.

Multiplication in the Montessori classroom is very visual and introduced as repeat addition. Have your child read the booklets to you when they bring them home. Reading the booklets helps reinforce mastery of the facts.



In Science we added parts of the scarecrow and the turkey for the children to match the 3-part cards and make booklets by coloring the whole scarecrow and then a page for each part. They are encouraged to write the corresponding word below the picture. We also have Thanksgiving sequencing cards to place the steps to make a pie in the correct sequence.

The Language area is bursting with highly creative and beautiful journal pages. The group is given a word of the day and can choose to use the word or create their own idea for a journal page. The children discovered a how to draw book and have been working from there to follow the sequence to create the picture. We has a very cute frog and the Queen page and a Sea monster and submarine combination. Emphasis here is on placement of the letters within the lines of the paper.



The Kindergarten children enjoyed a unit on Native Americans with Ms. Joey. Every day during the duration of the unit the children would be waiting by the classroom door early to go downstairs and begin. See the Pre-K/K Extended Day newsletter to understand more in depth exactly what they did. The projects looked beautiful.

Thanks to all for the creative "Turkey disguises. It was so much fun to watch them flow in; they are displayed in our hallway. Highly creative everyone.

We are talking about what we are thankful for and what it means to be grateful in anticipation of a wonderful Thanksgiving. Have a Happy and safe Thanksgiving!





# NOVEMBER PHOTO GALLERY

## South Room





# NEWS FROM THE EAST ROOM



## Ms. Joey, Ms. Carole

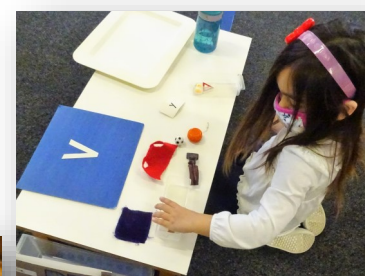
During this past month, the children have enjoyed projects, stories and discussions about our country's beginnings, and shared thoughts of what it means to be thankful. They also had fun learning the parts of the turkey and discovered that the wild turkey is only native to the North America.

Besides enabling a child to clarify and internalize such concepts as size, shape, color, taste, and sound, the sensorial materials also provide a basis for developing other skills such as music, mathematics, or language.



The Sensorial area has been very popular this month. The concepts of long and short for example are perceived in the red rods varying lengths. Rough and smooth are experienced by touching rough sandpaper and smooth paper.

Tracing a sandpaper letter "m" with his finger, a child not only sounds out the symbol "m" but also feels it's shape ! Later the muscles of his hand will remember the tracing motion as he writes the letter.



Later these lessons are repeated with the sandpaper globe, helping the children to distinguish between land (rough) and water (smooth) the children gain tools and knowledge to complete and understand their sensory exploration of the world: leaf and flower shapes, geometric polygons and solids, three-dimensional land and water forms, cutout maps, and a painted globe.



Montessori sensorial materials, by applying directly to the young child active sensory, make learning a natural result of the child's desire to explore, a beautiful thing to observe.

We want to extend a warm welcome to our newest student, Luka and his family.

We enjoyed celebrating Ava's 4th Birthday and Neel is now 3. Happy Birthday to both of you!!

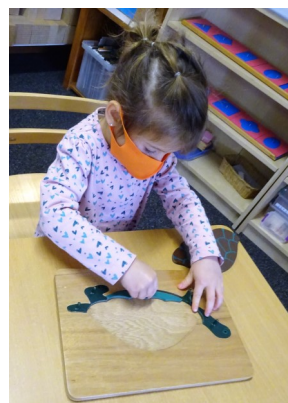
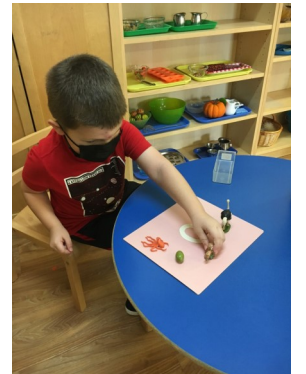
Thank you all for attending parent conferences, it was so nice to meet and connect with all of you. It is such a pleasure and privilege to be working with your children.

This week enjoy spent time with family and friends, and have a safe and relaxing Thanksgiving



# NOVEMBER PHOTO GALLERY

## East Room





# MORE WONDERFUL MOMENTS AT MONTESSORI PATHWAYS



*"Preventing conflicts is the work of politics; establishing peace is the work of education."  
~ M. Montessori*

