



WINTER 2020
VOLUME 5 ISSUE 2



CMH
Montessori School

cmh connections

UPCOMING EVENTS

January

- 18 Family Winter Bird Count
10:00-11:30am
- 20 No School - MLK Jr Day
- 26 Winter Open House
2:00-4:00pm
- 27 What's to Love About Juniors?
5:30-7:00pm
- 31 Juniors Date with Dad 8:30am

February

- 13 Senior Love Lunch and
Crazy Hair Day
Pre-Primary Day of Love
Juniors ABC's of Love
- 14 No School/Teacher Inservice Day
- 17 No School/Presidents Day
- 24 Senior Science Fair, *Open to All*
7:00-8:00pm

March

- 18 Family Astronomy Night
6:30-7:30pm
- 23-27 No School, Spring Break

LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR

Dear CMH Community,

I think **2020** sounds like the perfect year to reflect on our **vision** more clearly at CMH Montessori School. We began this work at our Staff Retreat in August 2019 with big questions such as:

What is our history and how does the past influence our present?

How do we live the mission and vision of CMH and what is the evidence?

What future does the CMH community embrace?

Where are we going and who is coming along?

The words, feelings and even pictures that were shared, with everyone's input, perspective and experiences were a collaboration of hope and devotion for CMH Montessori School. I would like to share some of the feedback we compiled:

Modeling grace and courtesy has a ripple effect throughout our school.

Woodstock is still alive and well at CMH!

I wish we could bottle up the special sauce that we have at CMH, but no one has the recipe.

We have helped to create good humans for over 47 years!

We guide and develop the whole child, not just teach them academics.

Maintain the culture of our roots.

CMH philosophy has stayed the same through the years. We are a community of teachers, staff, parents, and students who love Montessori and live it everyday.

I hope your vision is clear in what you want for your children and family, because we see YOU in our future.



CMH Wins
Little Miami River
Chamber Alliance
Non Profit Business
of the Year!

Casey

Casey Reed
CMH Director

For up-to-date information
follow CMH on



NEWS FROM PP1

We have had several months getting to know each other, making new friends and reconnecting with old friends, and learning the rules and routines of our classroom. Now, everyone is getting settled back after the holiday break and we are ready to learn and grow over the next several months! We are excited to see the wonderful growth that is going to happen during this time.

We will be very busy in the weeks to come. In Geography, we will be learning about the United States of America, and then on to Ohio. There will be various puzzles, stampings, cuttings and coloring works to engage our class. We recently were introduced to amphibians in the Zoology area, and will then move onto the next vertebrate group called birds. Botany has brought us to the study of seeds and roots. This area includes object and picture matching works, puzzles and labeling works. Lastly, we are exploring with water in the Science area, through different works, like sink versus float, condensation, surface tension, buoyancy and water volume.

As you can see, we have a lot of new lessons in the next few months. We are excited to be able to share our knowledge with all of your children through these new lessons and we hope they come home sharing a bit of what they do each day.

Michelle, Kim and Jeanne



NEWS FROM PP2

Happy New Year! We hope everyone had a wonderful holiday season and we are looking forward to an exciting new year with the kids! The children are all settled into their environment and have formed a great community. We see children helping each other when needed and taking care of their classroom and friends.

In the Art area the children have been busy painting at the easel! It is a popular work and the children seem to enjoy mixing colors to create their masterpieces. They also enjoyed the various holiday art works that were out for the month of December. More paint works have been introduced such as dot painting, paint stamping with a cookie cutter, and fold painting and there will be more introduced in the next couple of months. These are always popular and messy works!

In the Practical Life area the children are being introduced to more multi-step activities such as table scrubbing, floor scrubbing and whipping bubbles. These works are great for helping the children develop their concentration, coordination, independence and order. The children also use table and floor scrubbing to help care for their classroom and keep it beautiful.

Currently we are wrapping up our study of North America and will then focus on learning about the United States of America and Ohio specifically. The children will be introduced to the puzzle map of the USA, to the USA and Ohio flags, and to various landmarks and symbols associated with our country and state. In February we will focus on talking about the history of the US Presidents. Finally in Zoology we will wrap up our study of mammals and move on to learning about dinosaurs—always a favorite of the children! We are looking forward to an exciting couple of months in PP2!

Andrea, Megan and Marlis



NEWS FROM PP3

Happy New Year, PP3 family! We are excited to welcome 2020 with you and your children and are looking forward to a year full of purposeful work.

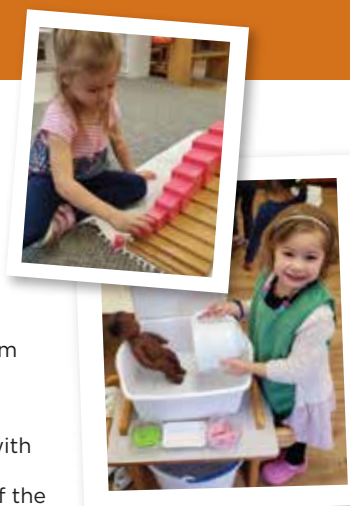
Maria Montessori said: *“The basis of society is movement with a useful aim. When we recognize this fact in children, we will better understand the essence of their psychic life. Children who act with purpose are happy because they are concentric with humanity’s vital function.”* (The 1946 London Lectures)

All of Maria Montessori’s writings are full of these kinds of simple truths. It makes complete sense that children—and adults, too—can only find true happiness if they are allowed to do what they’re supposed to be doing. Every single exercise in our classroom is designed to give children the opportunity to work purposefully towards a certain aim. It is important to understand that the work of the child is different from the work of the adult. As adults, we work towards completion, towards a product. Young children work to understand and enjoy the process; the product is often times not important to them.

Montessori, who was a keen observer as well as a scientist, designed and redesigned all of her materials with the idea of the importance of the process in mind. When a child builds the famous Pink Tower, it is about carefully carrying each cube from the shelf to the rug. It is about feeling the differences in size (the size of the smallest cube is 1cm³, the largest 10cm³). And it is about building the tower in the right order before taking it apart and taking each piece back to the shelf. With this work, the children do not create a product to take home, but they learn so much during the process. Building fine and gross motor skills, exercising their multiple step memory, seeing and feeling slight differences in size, and following directions by remembering the lesson, are some of the goals for this work.

Please come and observe our classroom when your time allows. You will see a lot of purposeful work and therefore happy children. This winter, we will enjoy Geography lessons about the USA and Ohio; we’ll experiment with light, learn about roots, reptiles and dinosaurs, and continue our studies about fractions.

Birte, Theresa, and Anne



NEWS FROM JUNIOR SOUTH

Our children came back from Winter break excited to delve back into lessons, reunite with friends, and the familiarity that is Junior South. Our new weekly work plans encouraged students to manage their weekly work expectations, while encouraging independence and intrinsic motivation. We work on goal planning, discuss weekly lessons, and complete the week with reflection time about their goals. Not unlike our own time management ability as adults, setting goals and timelines will foster organizational and prioritization skills, but even more importantly, independence.

As Maria Montessori once said, "The greatest sign of success for a teacher is to be able to say 'The children are now working as if I did not exist.'"

In Junior South, our main goal for the Winter months is to create a classroom environment which consistently encourages independence, as Maria Montessori would have wanted.

Anne and Diane



NEWS FROM JUNIOR NORTH

Over the last couple of months, we have completed our study of Asia with a culminating project. The students presented their countries to the classroom and parents. The students are already looking forward to what project awaits them at the end of our European continent study.

Nicki has taken over teaching the Zoology area of the classroom and has been teaching the children about the parts of the frog and it's life cycle. Anne has continued to give the children History/Science experiments. They love being able to repeat the experiment on their own or with a friend.

This month, we are going to complete the Zoo on the Move's "Inquiry 101". The Cincinnati Zoo brings animals into our classroom, and the students are able to ask in-depth questions and, after research, present a poster to others. Later this month we will be having Date with Dad. Be sure to send all the "Dads" in for some muffins and juice as well as quality time with their child in the classroom.

After our Open House at the end of the month we will also be guiding parents through a day in the life of a Junior student when we have our annual "What's to Love about Juniors?" We hope to see all of our Kindergarten parents and any Junior families interested in what their children do in the classroom. We really enjoyed spending time with our families at this event last year. It was a lot of fun to see our parents trying to complete their work plans just like the children do. We can't wait to see how the parents do this year.

Jessica and Nicki



NEWS FROM SENIORS

The children made a great impression at the Federal Courthouse downtown presenting their Mock Trials. "Rumpelstilzkin vs. Queen Malory" was performed by the fourth and fifth levels and "Cinderella vs. The House of Tremain" was performed by the sixth levels. We are very fortunate to have this opportunity, and we are grateful to the Honorable Judge Susan Dlott for allowing us to use her courtroom. We couldn't do this without Stephen Richey who arranges the use of the courtroom for us. This was a really fun way to learn about the legal system.

An important upcoming event is our Science Fair on February 24 from 7 to 8pm. Please plan to stop in for a visit that evening and let our students impress you with their scientific knowledge. Rehearsals will begin soon for our musical. This will be performed sometime in the spring. Stay tuned for further details. This is an event you don't want to miss! Preparations are underway for our Senior overnight excursion to the Wilds. We'll sleep in yurts, go on nighttime hikes and visit endangered animals.

John, Dana and Lisa



SAVE THE DATE!

STARGAZER SOIRÉE

Join us **Saturday, April 18**, for our annual auction to benefit the children, faculty and staff of CMH.

Consider joining the Auction Committee to make this event another HUGE success for our CMH community. The team is currently looking for sponsors and donations of services, gift cards or items for silent auction baskets. Look for  more information to come on this fun event!

SUMMER CAMP

Week 1: June 15-19
Week 2: June 22-26
Week 3: July 13-17
Week 4: July 20-24

SUMMER CARE

Week 1: June 8-12
Week 2: July 6-10
Week 3: July 27-31
Week 4: August 3-7

Look for more information in the coming weeks about our 2020 Summer Camps and Summer Care Program.



LETTER FROM THE BOARD

CMH Community,

Happy New Year! It's still a bit shocking when I remember it's now the year 2020. Now that we're back to school and back to work, we can focus on finishing the second half of the school year as strong as we started.

When I wrote to you in this letter last year, I described the primary responsibilities of the CMH Board. First, to ensure we have the right leadership in place to run the school, and second, to ensure we are managing the finances of the school with both the short-term and long-term health of the institution in mind. I followed this with some words of caution about short-term financial pressures caused by a demographic-driven dip in enrollment.

I'm very happy to say that the financial pressures...and the dip in enrollment...were temporary. For the first time in many years (ever?), we started the 2019-20 school year with a completely full pre-primary program. Even better, we have a waiting list for this year and for next. With this step up in enrollment, we're back to profitability and positive cash flow and we continue to invest in the school facility and grounds to ensure we're up to date on routine maintenance items while also taking opportunities to beautify the classrooms and common areas.

Just as important as the influx of new children in the classrooms is the wonderful new parents they bring along. It struck me at the "Mingle & Jingle" holiday celebration just how many new families we've welcomed into the CMH community over the past few years. Even more impressive is how much those parents have jumped into action to support the school. I'll take this opportunity to recognize four parents who have joined the Board of Trustees over the past year, including three who have joined since the start of this school year: Erica Meyer, Steve Glaros, Chris Castleman and Lisa Metzger. They have all jumped in with both feet and are making important contributions to the Board and the school.

We appreciate your commitment to CMH, and we encourage you to look for more ways to get involved. Many of you volunteer in the classrooms as readers and homework checkers. Many of you were at the school to take part in the Turkey Trot fundraiser. We've mingled & jingled. You've contributed to the Annual Fund (there's still time if you haven't yet!), and you'll soon be hearing more about the annual auction ...our most important fundraising activity of the year. Finally, and I say this at the end of every letter because it's so important, you can support CMH by using your voice to tell your friends and neighbors what an awesome place CMH is for your children...and could be for theirs!

All the best for 2020!

John Chevalier
CMH Board President

NATURE NOTES

Get Ready for the Winter Bird Count!

During the month of January, our Nature Study is devoted to Birds. All students will practice birding skills, using binoculars and field guides, and filling out checklists as we conduct our annual CMH Winter Bird Count. Our first count was in 2012, and each year the students enjoy learning about birds and collecting this important data. Biodiversity is a huge indicator of habitat health and children will use the gathered bird data to connect these links for our campus and come up with factors that might change the bird populations from previous years. So far our biggest total has been 41 different species and over 520 individual birds counted in 2017.

Depending on the birding skills of each group that participates, they will use one of 2 standard methods for counting birds. A "Point Count" is when birders record all birds seen and heard from a specific spot for a set period of time. This could be for 10 minutes at the bird blind or looking out the classroom window. Completing an "Area Search" means counting all birds seen and heard throughout an entire area, such as a particular trail or section of school property.

This year parents can participate too! To learn or improve on your birding skills sign up for 1 or all of the mini birding lessons at the Parent Birding Blitz, January 14 - 16. You can also register to help count at the Family Winter Bird Count on January 18. Watch your Friday folders for more info about these events.

Happy Winter Birding,

Veronica Brannen
CMH Naturalist