



FALL 2022  
VOLUME 8 ISSUE 1



# cmh connections

## CMH MIDDLE SCHOOL SET TO LAUNCH 2023

The launch committee is working hard to make this program a successful reality, and is focusing on three key areas: Staff, Space and Students.

### STAFF

We are actively recruiting for the teacher that will be at the heart of the Middle School community. We are looking for these qualities in an individual and will engage the current 6th graders in our interview process:

- Growth Mindset
- Curious
- Sense of Humor
- Resilient



### SPACE

The Middle School will launch in a freshly renovated classroom where the current office space is now situated. It will be remodeled to accommodate a Montessori classroom, including a kitchenette, break-out space in the classroom, wall modifications, lighting improvements, and dedicated outdoor space. The current 6th graders will have the opportunity for input as we all dream of what this space will be for the children. We are also actively considering where our vital administrative staff will be located during this time of transition.

### STUDENTS

The Students are our number one priority in everything we do. We are determining all of the elements necessary to make this program right for them from the start. From extracurricular offerings to inaugural class experiences, we will develop a program that is uniquely CMH and is appropriate for this plane of development.



*The design represented in the photos is for reference only.*

As we consider the Middle School Program at CMH for your child, these are the key tenets that will be a part of our program:

- Support for unique social, emotional, and academic learning needs of adolescents (SEAL)
- Foster community partnerships so students create their own idea of the world around them
- Project work with community and peers that are meaningful to teenagers, including the opportunity to establish and run a business
- Expanded programming for music, art, and movement
- Students are in charge of their own time management
- Deliver curriculum in line with state guidelines, but in a Montessori way
- Provide access to counselor support to prepare for the transition to High School

## UPCOMING EVENTS

### November

21-25 Fall Break, No School

### December

6 Campus Care  
1:00pm

13 & 15 Winter Woodland Gathering  
Time TBD

19-30 Winter Break, No School

### January

12 Campus Care  
1:00pm

16 MLK Day, No School

21 Family Bird Hike  
9:30am

23 Afterschool Clubs Begin

26 Seniors Parent/Child Night  
6:30pm

29 CMH Open House

### February

8 Campus Care  
1:00pm

20 President's Day, No School

23 Seniors Science Fair  
6:30pm

### March

7 Campus Care  
1:00pm

11 CMH 50th Gala and Auction

For more information,  
visit [cmhschool.com](http://cmhschool.com)  
or follow CMH on



## LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR

CMH Community,

In honor of our 50th Anniversary I would like to share some of the things that I love about CMH.

### 50 REASONS I LOVE CMH MONTESSORI SCHOOL

1. The welcoming feeling of love that overcomes me when I come to CMH.
2. PACT (Parents Assisting Children and Students) "our PTO"
3. When alumni parents and students come back to visit or reach out to us.
4. John Phenix, his beloved Singing Circle, wooden bowls, and Phenix Nature Pavilion.
5. Looking across the playground to remember the years in the Grailville Barn/Oratory.
6. The school campus- every inch of it!
7. Fall Picnics and Tailgate Events, especially when the leaves are changing
8. Annual Turkey Trot each November.
9. Spring Auction/Love Auction
10. The devoted and caring teachers who make a difference every single day.
11. The beautiful classrooms filled with plants, pets, and happy children.
12. The Wishing Poles at the bottom of the hill we used to sled down.
13. The 6th Grade graduation trees of each graduating class.
14. The lovely fountain that Stephen Richey made for the lobby, with tiles from families/benefactors that helped make the 2003 building expansion possible...and all of his pottery pieces sprinkled throughout the school.
15. The bricks at the flagpole engraved with family and staff names.
16. The Senior stream-pond, that my own child helped to build.
17. The Margy Knollman garden located just below the playground.
18. Margaret Pfarr - her loving-kindness and amazing memory.
19. The weather vane on top of the school.
20. The previous school sign that we preserved and placed on the path to the playground.
21. The current sign out front that beautifully displays our name and logo.
22. The feeling of joy, pride and service when I give a tour of the school.
23. Dana Dale - for believing in me and always being there rain or shine.
24. The little hidden Dogwood/Peace Porch in between PP2 and the lobby.
25. The coveted tire swings.
26. The Butterfly Garden behind the school building.
27. Every single student, parent, board and staff member I have worked with and learned from over the last 23 years.
28. The thrill of a family applying for enrollment on the spot, right after their tour.
29. Tie-dye spirit wear shirts
30. 6th grade graduation speeches
31. The Peace Pole that celebrates peace in front of the pond.
32. The benches scattered throughout the campus from families long ago.
33. Teacher Leann Varon and her great love of Geography and the Peace Table
34. The way we rose up and navigated our way through the pandemic with grace.
35. Outdoor Club with Veronica Brannen
36. The stone path to the playground.
37. Campus Care Days- formally known as Beautification
38. Parent-Teacher Conferences and Parent Education Nights
39. When Alumni enroll their own children at CMH.
40. All the Quilts and Class Projects
41. Student Birthday Celebrations, Life Histories, and the gift of a plant to take home.
42. Carpool is like a parade everyday morning and afternoon with smiles and waves.
43. Montessori education
44. Kelly Strang- a forever friend and supporter of CMH.
45. That we are learning to adapt to having a wait list for enrollment every year.
46. Creek Days
47. We Recycle, Upcycle, Re-imagine and Compost for our planet.
48. The lifelong friendships created during our time at CMH.
49. When others share that we have good energy, vibes or feelings.
50. That our main purpose is to assist in developing good human beings.

Casey Reed  
CMH Director

## NEWS FROM PRE-PRIMARY

Pre-Primary is off to a great start to the 2022-2023 school year! We have welcomed many new families into our classrooms and we are excited to get to know them. In the first few weeks, children are getting comfortable in their new environments and getting to know new friends. Returning children are busy making new friends, welcoming old friends and are serving as great role models for our new classmates.

At the beginning of the year, children are learning how to choose work throughout their day. Some works may be meant for a table, while others may be meant for a rug. Some works may be for one person while other works may be something they can choose with a friend. Children have the opportunity to work independently, with a friend or with a teacher. As the year progresses, children become more comfortable in their environment and understand the rules and routines of their day.

Children are introduced to new works in the classroom through lessons given by the teachers either in large or small group lessons, or in a one on one lesson. They are then given a chance to explore those newly introduced works on their own. Choosing which work to begin their day can be tricky at first. As children become more comfortable in the classroom, their work cycle begins to grow. A work cycle is being able to choose a work, complete it to the best of their ability, clean up the work, return it back to the correct space on the shelf and then choose their next work. The work cycle builds responsibility and independence within the classroom. Ask your child about their favorite works, ask them if it is a rug work, or table work, whether or not they like one person works or to work with a friend. They will be eager to share what they have been busy learning!

Children will also be working toward normalization over the next couple of months. Normalization is the term Montessori used to refer to children who are able to concentrate and work freely in the Montessori environment, exercising self-discipline and peace. As children begin to normalize, they begin to demonstrate more independence.

Thank you for sharing your child with us this year! We are looking forward to a great year of learning.

Your Pre-Primary Teachers,

*Megan Kelly, Michelle Meder,  
Jeanne Berter (PP1)*

*Andrea Glassmeyer, Anne Kroger,  
Colleen Seeger (PP2)*

*Theresa Bell, Jessie Seddelmeyer,  
Marlis Reidel (PP3)*





Every fall, the Junior students start the year with the 5 Great Lessons. These are part of Montessori's Cosmic Education, her idea that children need to understand the big picture before they can focus on individual pieces—how can you find North America on a globe without first understanding that our earth is a sphere?

The Great Lessons are one of the most important teachings in the Elementary classroom. They strengthen the curriculum and lead the way for all different kinds of science studies and research. The lessons are meant to be told in a dramatic way, they should be exciting and are designed to awaken the children's imagination and curiosity. Through the 5 Great Lessons, the children become aware that the universe is billions of years old and that it is based on the law and order through which all creation is interconnected.

The first Great Lesson introduces the students to the coming of the universe and the earth. This lesson includes different demonstrations that show how the continents and oceans formed.

The second Great Lesson involves the coming of life. It revolves around the Timeline of Life—a long chart with pictures and information about microorganisms, plants, and animals that have roamed the earth thousands of years ago. This lesson puts an emphasis on the great diversity of life and every living being's purpose.

The third Great Lesson is the Coming of Human Beings. With the help of a timeline, a tool, and a hand, the children learn about the three gifts that make humans so special—a mind to imagine, a hand to do work, and a heart that loves. The beginning of civilizations and fundamental human needs are fascinating to children and this lesson is a great start for extensive research projects.

The fourth Great Lesson tells the story of letters and writing. We talk about the development of the written alphabet and another special human trait—the ability of committing thoughts onto paper. Children love to learn about pictographs, symbols, hieroglyphs, and other forms of early alphabets.

The Great Lessons conclude with the fifth one—the story of numbers. Early civilizations often only had “one”, “two”, and “more than two” as their numeric system before different numbering systems throughout the centuries lead to the decimal system that we use today.

All of the five stories hold a great amount of information about the origins of the world around us. These stories really are the starting point of all of the Elementary curriculum. We refer to them during cultural lessons to help the children form their view of the world and make connections that deepen their understanding of the universe and how everything is interrelated. It is wonderful to watch the students dive deep into their research and find what interests them. Come in and observe when your time allows and see for yourself all of the wonderful things happening in our lower Elementary classrooms.

*Birte and Anne (Junior South)*

*Kim and Karen (Junior North)*



## OUTDOOR EDUCATION

WITH VERONICA



Campus Care is a large focus during Nature Study this year as we celebrate our school's 50th Anniversary. Through the end of October our school days have been mostly sunny and dry and ideal for studying and caring for our campus. Students have explored the various gardens, bird blind, nature trails and other features that make our schoolyard so special. Sounds of crickets, katydids, blue jays and many other birds have filled our ears as we practice listening quietly to follow and decipher the calls and songs. Using tools to sweep, water, weed, rake, dig, haul, and plant has allowed connections to

## NEWS FROM SENIORS

After our initial return to school, the Seniors classroom launched into the Cosmic Curriculum, as Dr. Montessori called it, introducing our subjects for study by way of a series of Great Lessons. The first Great Lesson is the Coming of the Universe, which opens the gates for the study of areas like astronomy, chemistry, geology and physics. The second Great Lesson sheds light on the coming of life to earth, unlocking the subject areas such as biology, botany, oceanography, and paleontology. Our 6th graders delivered both of these lessons successfully to our eager 4th and 5th graders.

Following the success of the first two great lessons, the third Great Lesson, The Coming of Humans focused on the characteristics unique to humans, from our capacity to love and care for others, to our skillful hands that we've used to shape our world, and our incredible imaginations that have led us to explore beyond our home planet. With the coming of humans, our study of human history will focus on ancient civilizations for all levels.

Practical Life has also been present in our classroom from the outset, with students doing a variety of jobs to maintain our classroom community, including raising the flag, washing dishes, doing laundry,

vacuuming, and many others. Our Hot Lunch Chefs have been successfully completing their missions, from procuring the groceries, to preparation of the meal, and the eventual clean-up.

Students were eager to jump into enrichment classes including Nature with Veronica, Spanish with Blanca, Tech with Manuel, Art with Gina, Music with Annie, and Wellness with Casey. Celebrating the season's bounty by harvesting pawpaws from the CMH campus and turning them into a delicious bread, pie, and punch was a highlight of the Fall season.

At the close of October, Blanca led our Dia De Los Muertos celebrations. The Day of the Dead is a unique holiday and a joyful time that helps people remember the deceased and celebrate their memory. We have wrapped up the 4th and 5th Great Lessons, inspiring the children with the story of the coming of language and writing, and the coming of numbers. We have also started our study of Ancient China. Our students have been busy and the fall has flown by for us!

*Rachel, Susan and Blanca*



spark, form, and deepen between each child and their outdoor environment.

In the coming months we will continue working on Campus Care projects such as maintaining bird feeding stations and removing invasive plants from our woods. Students will be observing and tending their indoor gardens that were planted in the Grow Labs in each classroom and when the plants are big enough, we will harvest and eat what we have grown, probably around Thanksgiving.

Enjoy the outdoors!



# MEET THE TEACHER

## ANGI BAKER

In the winter of 2005, our family visited the open house at CMH and I was sold! I knew that a Montessori education would be the best option for my children. My son, Alex Gelly, began the next fall as a kindergartener in PP2 with Leanne and Michelle. My daughter, Maddie Gelly, began as a 3-year-old in PP1 with Casey and Andrea as her teachers. At the time, I was in graduate school at the University of Cincinnati and had a work schedule that allowed me to be an active parent volunteer in their classrooms. The more time I spent at the school, the more I knew that I wanted to be a part of the community. During the years that my children were in school, I worked as both an assistant in PP2 and as a substitute teacher. Sparked by a love of education, I embarked on my own career that has now led me full circle and back to CMH.

Professionally, my background is in education with both my undergraduate and master's degrees in special education. I recently earned an educational specialist degree as part of the Educational Leadership program at Wright State University. At present, I hold a teaching license for special education and an administrative specialist license. I have worked as an administrator at a charter school as well as a classroom teacher for students with disabilities. Most recently, I taught MD, or multiple disabilities, students at Middletown High School. These are the students with the most intense disabilities, for example, students with significantly low cognitive ability paired with another disability such as blindness, deafness, or other physical impairments.



I was excited to learn of the opening for a Learning Support Services Director at CMH and the possibility of returning to the school that had educated my children as well as provided me with early opportunities to be hands-on in a classroom while in graduate school. The LSS Director role matches my skill set and I am elated to finally be a full-time member of the CMH community. It has truly felt like coming home.

# TEACHER SPOTLIGHT

## DIANE GERSTEN

***Diane Gersten taught at CMH for 24 years and retired at the end of last year. As one of our school's longest serving teachers, we asked Diane what some of her favorite memories of CMH were and to tell us a bit about her CMH story. Diane began as a parent and played a major role in starting our PACT (Parents Assisting Children and Teachers) organization which is the backbone of our school today before embarking on her Montessori educational journey which made CMH her teaching home.***

I "discovered" CMH while looking for a preschool experience for my son, Zak, in 1992. I immediately fell in love with what we called "the barn"—the lower level of Grailville's Oratory and home to CMH at the time. I found CMH to be such a warm and welcoming place that I spent many hours as a parent volunteer. I would help wherever I could, and soon became enthralled with the Montessori philosophy and how it served the needs of each child. I was a traditionally trained teacher and had taught at the middle school level prior to moving to Cincinnati and working for Procter & Gamble as a training specialist and Media Manager. I was so convinced by what I was experiencing at CMH, that I decided to

pursue Montessori training. My first classroom experience was as a Pre-Primary assistant working with Lucia Hopple and Leann Varon. Despite the adorable faces, I knew my passion would be to work with the 6-9 ages in the Juniors classroom. The following year, I began teaching with Dana Dale in the Junior North classroom in what was the first phase of our current building. Dana soon completed her 9-12 training and joined John Phenix in the Senior classroom. This gave me the incredible opportunity to work with many different partners throughout the years. As CMH continued to grow, the building grew too and I moved into our current Junior South classroom teaching with Peggy Goodnow and remained in the Juniors wing until Spring of 2022, working with many incredible partners including current teacher Anne Tobe.

I loved teaching math and the cultural subjects. My favorite lessons to give were the stamp game, bead frame, and the checkerboard. I enjoyed watching students in Juniors move from manipulatives to the abstract as they mastered their understanding. Working with students in the kitchen was always a highlight as we made pumpkin bread every year.



I have too many wonderful CMH memories to list, many involving my own children, Zak and Chloe, and so many with the awesome students and their families, and my incredible colleagues throughout the years. In addition to my memories I treasure the PrePrimary quilt I won the year Zak and Chloe were in the same class—it still resides on a guest room bed! CMH will forever hold a special place in my heart.



## LETTER FROM THE BOARD

CMH Community,

Happy Fall! It's hard to believe we are already two months into the new school year. And this is not just any school year, it's our 50th year of educating and developing the character of children! To our new families, I'd like to say welcome to our wonderful school. For our returning families, it's great to be with you again and I look forward to seeing you at the events we have planned throughout this school year.

I'm pleased to report that we are at our highest enrollment levels in the history of the school. This is a testament to our dedicated staff and teachers that have created an amazing environment for the children that CMH welcomes through its doors each day. They are the backbone of the school and provide a well-rounded education for our children. The word is getting out and that is reflected in our increasing enrollment.

The Board at CMH has been busy this year ensuring that our school is well positioned for the next 50 years. We are in a strong financial position and continue to be prudent with managing our expenses. We are investing in the future to ensure our facilities continue to adequately serve our teachers, staff, and children. This includes developing plans to expand the footprint of the school that will allow us to accommodate our new middle school and provide a more functional space for all students. You've also likely noticed a much-needed expansion of the parking lot. Finally, our annual Turkey Trot will be raising

funds for a new Nature Playscape Playground. This year, CMH will be providing an additional incentive to help our little turkeys reach our goal. CMH will match the \$25,000 fundraising goal with an additional \$25,000. I'm a big fan of the Turkey Trot as it's one of the opportunities that everyone, including students, gets to participate to help improve our school. It is a shining example of how our CMH community comes together.

In closing, I would encourage families new and returning to volunteer or engage with the school by participating in our community events. Covid had put a damper on our ability to bring the community together. We are finally back to "being CMH" and having community events such as our CMH Tailgate Party, Campus Care Day, and the Back to School Bash. If interested in being more involved, reach out to your child's teacher and see if they need help, consider becoming a board member, or even simply show up on the 18th and root on the little turkeys trotting around the parking lot!

I don't have the opportunity to say this enough, but a big Thank You to our amazing director, staff, and teachers! We wouldn't be the strong community we are without each and every one of you.

Sincerely,

Mark Sancrant  
CMH Board President



## 2022-23 BOARD MEMBERS

**Mark Sancrant, President**  
*President,  
Blue Ash Capital*

**Christina Reinerman, Vice-President**

**Stephen Glaros, Treasurer**  
*Director of Risk Management,  
GE Aviation*

**Lisa Metzger, Secretary**  
*Information Security Governance,  
Fifth Third Bank*

**Emily Egan, Member**

**Nichole Metzger, Member**

**Casey Reed**  
*Director/Principal,  
Children's Meeting House*

**John Phenix, Honorary Member**  
*Seniors Teacher  
Children's Meeting House*

**Stephen Richey, Honorary Member**  
*Senior Counsel  
Thompson Hine LLP*

## 2021-22 STAFF MEMBERS

Jessica Anderson	<i>Development Director</i>
Angi Baker	<i>Learning Support Services/ Intervention Specialist</i>
Theresa Bell	<i>PP3 Teacher</i>
Jeanne Berter	<i>PP1 Assistant</i>
Veronica Brannen	<i>Naturalist</i>
Birte Buse	<i>Junior South Teacher</i>
Gina Bush	<i>Art Teacher/Junior North Assistant Teacher</i>
Sarah DeJager	<i>Bookkeeper/Aftercare</i>
Rachel Eberhard	<i>Senior Teacher</i>
Andrea Glassmeyer	<i>PP2 Teacher</i>
Annie Huey	<i>Music Teacher</i>
Megan Kelly	<i>PP1 Teacher</i>
Kim Kimmons	<i>Junior North Teacher</i>
Anne Kroger	<i>PP2 Teacher</i>
Carrie Lyons	<i>Before &amp; Aftercare</i>
Susan Maggard	<i>Senior Teacher</i>
Michelle Meder	<i>PP1 Teacher</i>
Blanca Mosconi	<i>Spanish Teacher/Senior Assistant</i>
Margaret Pfarr	<i>Office Manager</i>
Bridget Platt	<i>Fitness Teacher/Junior South Assistant</i>
Casey Reed	<i>Director</i>
Marlis Reidel	<i>PP3 Assistant</i>
Jessie Seddelmeyer	<i>PP3 Teacher</i>
Colleen Seeger	<i>PP2 Assistant</i>
Emily Seger	<i>Office Assistant</i>
Manuel Susarret	<i>Technology</i>
Anne Tobe	<i>Junior South Teacher</i>
Karen Whitlock	<i>Junior North Teacher</i>

## WANT TO GET INVOLVED?

We are always looking for families to become more involved at CMH, if you would like to lend a helping hand, please contact Jessica Anderson [anderson@cmhschool.com](mailto:anderson@cmhschool.com)

### WAYS TO GET INVOLVED

- **Staff Support**  
Teacher Appreciation Committee, Holiday Luncheon Team, PACT Elves Collection
- **Fundraising**  
Turkey Trot, Annual Fund Campaign
- **Spring Auction**  
Donation Acquisition, Donation Management, Theme/Decorations
- **Campus Care**  
Classroom garden helper, campus care support

**OTHER IDEAS? WE'RE ALL EARS!**  
Send your ideas to [office@cmhschool.com](mailto:office@cmhschool.com)

# 50<sup>th</sup> ANNIVERSARY 1972 • 2022

2022 marks our 50th anniversary and we couldn't be prouder. Join us as we continue to celebrate CMH's Golden Anniversary throughout the year. We want to hear from you! Email us a photo or share a favorite memory of your time at CMH to be included in a future issue of CMH Connections.

Send to Jessica Anderson  
anderson@cmhschool.com



## Future Astronomers

By Anne Tobe

At the beginning there was nothing. Total darkness...then, I carefully hold up a black balloon filled with glitter and watch the children's eyes in amazement when it pops and the "big bang" erupts before our eyes. It was during this moment, in the middle of the First Great Lesson (Coming of the Universe), that I was inspired to learn more about astronomy.

Fast forward to summer, while in sunny Florida, miles away from CMH and lesson planning, I learned that I was the recipient of a beautiful Orion XT8 Dobson telescope. Suddenly, memories of an application, the Cincinnati Observatory, and the Future Galileos project came flooding back to me. Wait...I know nothing about telescopes and astronomy education. Yet, I think back to the First Great Lesson and the feelings it gives me every time I present it, and I remember that in May I decided I needed a telescope to take that lesson to the next level. And here we are.

I spent the majority of my summer spending time with nine other Future Galileos recipients and training with Astronomer Dean Regas from the Cincinnati Observatory. We built our telescopes and started looking towards the night (and day) skies, practicing calibrating our scopes, changing lenses from 25 mm to 10 mm, figuring out why I couldn't find the sun EVEN when I was using my solar lens, and learning that a full moon isn't all it's cracked up to be through a telescope. My summer was filled with process, very little product, yet I couldn't wait to come back to school and spread curiosity through our Great Lessons (and telescope).



Scan for more information about the Future Galileos program at Cincinnati Observatory.

## TURKEY TROT

CMH is hosting our 8th Annual Turkey Trot on Friday, November 18!

Our big and little turkeys will be trotting to make our Nature Playscape dreams come true! In honor of our school's 50th Anniversary celebration this year your pledges will be matched to reach our \$50,000 goal.

**\$25,000**  
(PLEDGE GOAL)

+

**\$25,000**  
(CMH MATCH)

**\$50,000**

Thank you to our extended CMH community and all of our Turkey Trot participants and volunteers for making this such a memorable event each year!

Scan to pledge your donation to the 2022 Turkey Trot!

