



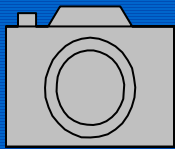
# Rochester Montessori School E-Newsletter

Whole Child \* Whole World

Volume 2, Number 1

## In This Issue

- Welcome
- From the Office
- PTSA
- Toddler News
- Children's House News
- Elementary News
- Specialist News
- OEC Update
- From the Director
- Parent Education



SMILE! and call Julie in the office if you can help with picture day on

October 10.

288-8725

**LOST & FOUND:** is located on the rack outside the office. Check for items your child may have misplaced!

## Welcome and Welcome Back!

*Adaptation...*

*a process whereby the young child absorbs the culture of his/her time and place, taking in all the spirit, the customs, the ambitions and attitudes of a society simply by living in that society.*

As the first month at RMS closes, it is exciting to observe this special power of young children to adapt. New and returning children have quickly settled into the welcoming environment of the RMS community. As the children create themselves as human beings through interaction with the environment, the RMS community strives to help parents adapt as well. Welcome to all families; new and returning. We offer this online newsletter as a source of information and a connection to the day to day happenings in yours and all the children's environments.

## From the Office

- Students from the Children's House and Elementary classrooms will be having their school pictures taken by Herff Jones Photography on Tuesday, October 10<sup>th</sup>. The office will be sending order forms home with your child. Please return the completed forms to the office whether you are purchasing pictures or not. Even if you do not wish to purchase any pictures your child will still have their picture taken for the class photos. **We also ask that if you have more than one child that attends either Children's House or Elementary that you send one order form with payment enclosed for each child. In the past it has been ok to include all payments in one envelope but that is no longer acceptable.** Herff Jones uses digital cameras instead of film cameras. This means that the photographers can view the image immediately which should result in fewer retakes. The office is looking for 4-5 volunteers to help with pictures that day. Please call Julie or email her at [office@rmschool.org](mailto:office@rmschool.org) if you can help out.

- The sign up sheets for Parent Teacher Conferences will be posted on Monday, October 2<sup>nd</sup> on the wall to the left of the boys' bathroom.

- Please note that school starts each morning at 8:45. There are a few parents who have been bringing their children late. We ask that you try to have your child to school on time. Children who come in late cause a lot of disruption in the class rooms.

## Events Calendar

### October

- 2-Sign up sheets for conferences posted
- 4-6 E2 Eagle Bluff Trip
- 4 Montessori Awareness for Toddler/Children's House/E1 Parents 7:00 pm
- 6 Innisbrook orders are due
- 10 Picture Day
- 10 E1 Parent Visits 7:45 – 9:00 am
- 13 No School – Staff Development Day
- 18 Toddler Parent Discussion with Julianne 2:00-3:00 pm
- 19 No School – Staff work day
- 20 No School-Conferences
- 26 PTSA meeting 9:00 am
- 27 Oaks Morning Visit 8:00 – 8:30 am

### November

- 5 Multicultural Day
- 10 Willows Fall Harvest Gathering

## PTSA

The school year is off to a great start and we have already had three very successful PTSA events. Marianne and I (Sherry) are looking forward to more successful events with more of your help. We have identified several people to coordinate different events but we are still looking for more event coordinators to lighten the load.

### Welcome New Families Picnic

Many new and "old" families joined together on the RMS grounds for a picnic during orientation week on Wednesday, August 30. It was a beautiful sunny afternoon and a great opportunity to meet new friends. The children spent a lot of time in the sand pile while the parents and guides conversed. This is a new event for RMS and will likely be repeated next year since it was so well received. Thanks to those who helped with this activity, including the office staff.

### Parent Connection Coffee

The first week of school brought another new event, the Parent Connection Coffee which occurred after drop-off in the entry on Friday, September 8. Parents enjoyed coffee, tea, and treats while they met new people and got reacquainted with others. I suspect we were a bit noisy but there were no complaints! Thanks to the office staff in helping with this event and thanks to Marianne Couser who did a lot of the planning, set-up and clean-up. A special thanks to Janine Yanisch for picking up the coffee at Caribou!

### Apple Harvest Picnic

Although the day started with cloudy skies and mist on the windshield, threatening the success of this event, many families toughed it out and attended the Apple Harvest Picnic Fall Gathering. They were rewarded by a beautiful day in the apple orchard complete with a wagon ride, apple picking, corn mazes, pumpkin picking, grape picking, picnic munching, dessert indulging and mingling with other families (and playing, of course!). Thanks to all those who volunteered to bring water (an abundance!), dessert, set-up and clean-up. A lot of people stepped in to help out and it was much appreciated by Marianne and me. A BIG thanks to Marianne Couser for all she did to make this event a success!



## Upcoming PTSA Events:

September 15-October 6:  
Innisbrook fundraiser

October 26, 9:00 am  
PTSA Meeting

November 5, 3-5pm:  
Multi-cultural day

## PARENT CONNECTION EVENING/ORGANIZATIONAL MEETING

We had a good response for this second annual meeting that focuses on organizing the PTSA events and activities for the year. We identified Chair and Co-Chairs for several committees but we are still in need of a few, including Multi-Cultural Day which is quickly approaching. There was some great discussion occurring regarding the upcoming events and much enthusiasm and excitement. We will have a list of Committee Chairs and contacts available soon. Please take this opportunity to get involved in at least one PTSA event or activity! Please contact Sherry Jester or Marianne Couser for more information or to volunteer your time.

### PTSA Meeting

The next PTSA meeting is scheduled for October 26 at 9 am in the school library. Please plan on attending. We are looking for a volunteer to fulfill the role of secretary for the PTSA as well. Please let us know if you are interested!

Please get involved to continue to make these events successful!

Marianne Couser – [Marianne@productiveMentality.com](mailto:Marianne@productiveMentality.com) 282-2610  
Sherry Jester – [hcloft@charter.net](mailto:hcloft@charter.net) 536-9492

---

## Toddler News

### Acorns

Acorns are settling in after our first few weeks of school not to much crying, hurray! The children come in excited to find work. Juliane will hold a parent discussion on October 18 from 2:00-3:00 pm.

---

## Children's House News

### Willows

This month has kept us busy orientating the new children and reviewing lessons for the returning children. Jana has been working hard to learn our Montessori way of guiding the children!

We have been studying the parts of a tree with special focus on the apple tree. Our songs and stories have reflected this theme. We are planning to treat ourselves by baking some apple crisp next week! We have also been singing about squirrels with bushy tails, which are busy gathering and cracking nuts. Did you know squirrels have 4 different uses for their tails? In the afternoon, the grasshoppers jumping with us on the playground lead to the study of the grasshopper with its 12 body parts! Soon, we will start discussing Fall with its colorful leaves. We will learn about the parts and various shapes of leaves. Our art area will offer many activities for the children to create their own colorful leaves.

Please note we have changed the date of our Fall Harvest gathering to Friday, November 10th, because there is no school on Friday, November 17th! There will be more information coming home about our gathering as the date approaches.

Check out this website for more "Hands On History" opportunities at the History Center of Olmsted County:

[www.olmstedhistory.com](http://www.olmstedhistory.com)

---

## Elementary News

### Elementary 1

On Thursday, September 14<sup>th</sup> several parents that are new to the Elementary 1 classroom attended an orientation session hosted by the E1 staff. During this session parents were able to hear about what their child will

The E1, along with E2, attended the "Hands On History Days" at the Olmsted County History Center on Friday, September 22<sup>nd</sup>. The children were able to go to several learning stations where professional demonstrators and community members shared their knowledge. The topics included such things as Pioneer Music, Storytelling about Farm Life, Tales of the Fur Trade, and Rope making.

On Tuesday, October 10<sup>th</sup> our classroom will be having a Parent Visit. All the E1 parents can come from 7:45 am to 9 am and have their child show them what they have been working on since the beginning of the year. If you are an E1 parent, please plan to attend. If you can not attend this one, there will be other opportunities later in the year.

---

## Specialist News

### Physical Education – LuAnn Nicholson

Year after year there has been an increased concern regarding the fitness level of children. As recently as last week, the American Academy of Pediatrics advised that children get at least an hour of exercise each day. To this end, RMS has made the commitment to offer your elementary children physical education each school day, and offers movement at least once a week to the extended day children in Children's House. Our goal is to provide fun activities that enhance their development, physically, socially and emotionally.

Currently the elementary students are practicing catching and throwing skills, baseball skills and numerous tag games. Children's House has started the year with balance activities, the "dog" walk (enhancing coordination and balance), throwing at targets, locomotor movements and spatial awareness activities. We are all enjoying the use of the field north of the building and our spacious indoor space. Thank you!!! As the year progresses your children will be involved in dance, tumbling, sport skills and many other activities, as we strive for a well rounded curriculum in physical education. Your participation and support will be encouraged as the year continues.

**Update:** The Elementary Children were successful once again in having the highest percentage of children (for small schools) complete The Kids' Run on May 28, 2006! A total of 21 out of 40 children ran in the race (53%). Along with the tremendous health benefit that running brings them, they were also awarded a \$250.00 grant for RMS for the third year in a row. Congratulations to the dedication and hard work of the E1 and E2 runners!



### **Upcoming Fitness Events (Community and School):**

Join kids across the country and celebrate the **Worldwide Day of Play**. This event takes place at the Rochester Athletic Club on September 30, 2006, from 1-6 p.m., for children ages 8-14. Children get in free, eat healthy snacks and enjoy numerous fitness activities. For more information call the American Heart Association Office at 507-356-2805 or visit the website listed to the left. Information has been sent home with the Elementary students.

**International Walk and Bike to School Day:** This event is to raise worldwide awareness of the importance of physical activity and safety when walking or biking to school. Since it is not possible for most of our students to walk and bike to school, we will be taking time out of our schedule to walk the school grounds in promotion of this day. This event is for K-6<sup>th</sup> graders, and will take place October 4, 2006 at 1:00 p.m.

**6<sup>th</sup> Annual Rochester Invitational Cross Country One Mile Run:** This event is open to grades 1-8. The run is scheduled for Thursday, October 12, 2006, at 5:15 p.m., at Century High School. Forms have been sent home with the Elementary students.

### **French- Clarisse Colin-Hoag**

Bienvenue, Welcome!

This month we have been busy reviewing some basic French vocabulary; How to ask something: "Je peux aller boire s'il vous plait?"

(Please can I go get a drink of water?)

Introducing ourselves: "Je m'appelle Jean-Pierre, j'ai 10 ans".

(My name is Jean-Pierre, I am 10 years old).

Greeting people: "Bonjour! Comment ca va? Ca va bien merci!"

(Hello, how are you? I am well thank you.)

Elementary 2 students will be doing more reading this year as well as working on grammatical structures and pronunciation. This is especially important if you want to be understood in French because the French language is very precise. Some students have volunteered to represent their class and become spokesperson. Their responsibilities include posting a birthday list (Merci Laura!), to helping out others with assignments. Some students will volunteer to keep the language room nice, taking care of materials and, making sure that everything is put it away.

Fridays are special! We will have about 20 minutes of activities that children can choose, some of the favorites are:

1,2.3 Soleil., Paris Metro, Jaco dit., Les familles.

I will keep you updated with our upcoming activities in French as we will be talking more about our family and home, and how children from France live daily.

## Outdoor Environment

As we enter this first full year in our new building, many are anxious to see the outdoor environment take shape. OEC (Outdoor Environment Committee) along with the Board of Directors oversees the development of the outdoor environment at RMS. A lot has been happening behind the scenes; and some of that work is becoming visible in the changes outside.

As we await our comprehensive plan from Ron King at Natural Playgrounds, we have been diligently working on preparing the land for its intended use. Crews of parents and staff gathered on several days this summer to carry out “preparatory” work such as clearing rocks, creating contour maps of the land, eradicating invasive plants, disassembling old equipment to make room for the new, installing signage and shade structures.

More recently, a crew of IBM Volunteers joined OEC committee members and RMS parents to landscape the front of our building. In just a few short hours, crews transformed the front of the school into a beautiful space for all to enjoy. Many thanks to the IBM. OEC has scheduled IBM crews for 3 more work sessions and hopes to foster a relationship that will bring us into next year and more help with the installation of our natural playground elements that will more directly impact the day to day growth and play of the children.



---

## From the Director...

We here at RMS, like thousands of other Montessori schools around the world, feel that, in the midst of the current educational crisis, we have, if you will, the answer. Our answer of course lies in the practices and principles that Dr. Montessori discovered years ago in her work with children, the most profound of which is the idea that education, limited to the intellect, is short sighted. Education, she determined, must be an “aid to life” in all its complexities, not just exercises of the brain. As politicians, scientists, and other educators search for alternative curriculums to bolster reading, writing, and arithmetic scores on high stakes standardized exams, and as schools change from one model to the next, Montessori schools have remained relatively constant for 100 years. The certainty of our practice is confirmed only in the child. Montessori, we believe, discovered the true essence of the child, an essence that is not malleable, not fluid, but rather is a constant over racial and socioeconomic boundaries. It is an essence that most certainly does not change with the ebb and flow of the educational-political climate. On the contrary, the essence the child yearns to express itself despite the incredible constraints, obstacles, and limitations imposed upon it by the often overwhelming adult world. In short, the essence may be summed up by saying that the child, in the most natural state, utilizes energy for self creation. When this happens, we call it Normalization. When it does not happen, we call it Deviation. (This is a simplified version but illustrates the point and should not be confused with the generally understood definitions of normal and deviant.) It is our intention to create the best possible environment for that essence to express itself, the best possible environment for normalization to occur. You may well know that we always use the word “work” for the activities in which the children engage. This is simply because we view a child, in the most natural state, as working on self creation – which is, in effect, creating today the adult of tomorrow. The specifics of any given activity are secondary to the primary activity of creation of the self.

Now, I know that each of you as parents or guardians consider your children as the most important aspect of your lives – otherwise you would not have them at this school. We want to do whatever we can to help you understand the intricacies of Montessori and what it means on all levels, not just the academic side. This understanding is a key aspect of allowing your child(ren) to develop as nature intended because you, as parents and guardians are the most important factor in your child’s development, not us. For most other aspects of life, understanding is not a vital part of functioning. You need not understand motors and electronics to operate a car; you need not understand digital technology to work with computers, iPods, and cell phones; you need not understand medicine to go to the doctor; you need not understand furnaces and air conditioners to climate control your house and so on. Without this specific knowledge, your life is not significantly affected. But children and their development are different. There are literally hundreds of books about child rearing and development which attempt to “teach” you what you need to know about your child. Combine those with all the ideas that people have generated on their own and it can be quite a difficult landscape to navigate. We want to share with you what we have come to believe and to know about how best to

allow children to develop. And that is the starting point, a deep reverence for the child's ability to do just that – develop on his or her own. Parents, teachers, and adults in general, often believe that we need to “do something” to get this process going and to keep it going. There is some truth to that but it is not doing something to the child. It is, rather, doing something with the environment in which the child functions and doing something to ourselves. The environment is the easier of the two. We want to share with you our understanding of the environment's affect on a child's development. You will never be able to reproduce the environments found at our school – these are designed specifically for the children. Your home is for both adults and children but there are many things that can be done to create the most positive balance. The other part, the doing something to ourselves is the hard part. What can we do to ourselves? We want to share with you what Montessori meant when she said that we need to “put on humility”. Put on humility so that we strip, to the best of our ability, the adult issues of anger and pride, stresses and concerns, and other problems that taint our interactions with the child. Putting on humility is the biggest challenge we all have here as educators and there as parents.

In order for our education to be an “aid to life” we must see education as taking place at all times in all places with all children. It is not an endeavor limited to the confines of the school. We need your help and you need our help. This is the connection that allows us, in turn, to help the child. Together we aid a child's life and it is crucial that we are on the same page, perceiving that aid in a similar way. I urge you to take advantage of the learning opportunities at the school, even if you have attended an awareness session before. Each day we discover something about ourselves or our community and there is never an end to refreshing and renewing our knowledge because there is never an end to the child.

### **Montessori Awareness Parent Sessions**

October 4<sup>th</sup> 7:00 pm

Toddler – Q and A for the Toddler years

Children's House – Practical Life, Montessori in the Home

E1 and E2 – Curriculum Area Focus

November 9<sup>th</sup> 7:00 pm

Toddler – Topic based on information generated on October 4<sup>th</sup>

Children's House – Q and A

E1 and E2 – Curriculum Area Focus

.

---

**Rochester Montessori School**