

ROCHESTER MONTESSORI SCHOOL

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Rochester, MN 55901

Phone: 507-288-8725

http://www.rmschool.org

About Us

Rochester Montessori School is a nondenominational, not for profit organization serving children from 18 months to 12 years old. Our diverse community is open to children of all cultures and backgrounds and we frequently serve children from the international community. We are alive with the spirit of acceptance and inclusion. We currently have approximately 160 students from 120 families and 28 staff members to serve them.



*Whole Child * Whole World*

Newsletter Contributors:

**Nathan Hauber
Janine Yanisch
Sherry Jester
Patrick Sheedy III
Julie French
Sarah Field
Marina Ramirez de Berglund**

**Andy Saunders
LuAnn Nicholson
Yvonne Lee
Christine Raasch**

From the Director

Dear RMS Families,

Time and time again, we are reminded how daunting a task we face each day here at the school. It is no easy task, preparing the future of humanity. One of the things that makes RMS so special is the superb environments that we have to offer the child. The rooms are spacious and bright and filled with an incredible array of appealing materials; the specialists' areas are equally as beautiful and equipped. As anyone who has been to other schools knows, we have more to offer the child here than 99% of schools world wide – yet, incredibly, there is still much work to be done to make our environments even better suited to meeting the child's emerging developmental needs.

It is not the building, however, or the rooms, or the materials that make a school great, it is the people. Here at RMS, we have a tremendous staff and an incredible body of parents and guardians. The staff is dedicated to self improvement and continual learning so that our efforts best support the needs of the child. We must first prepare ourselves so that we are able to serve the child. At RMS, the staff is not satisfied with simply helping the children accomplish tasks or learn facts. We are focused on the innate need within the child to become an increasingly independent and productive person. Hats off to the staff for

their unyielding dedication to themselves in service of the child.

As the year winds down, you parents and guardians also deserve a word of thanks for selflessly seeking out Montessori and committing yourself to the development of your child. As you know, Montessori requires more of parents than do other places. Like most things that lead to success, Montessori parents have to be dedicated and committed to understanding the dynamics of natural child development. It is you who have taken an interest in and found the time and energy to genuinely engage in and understand the process of your child's development. This is no easy task and you are to be commended for your efforts. Undoubtedly your child is the most important aspect of your life – and it shows!

Today we lay the foundation for tomorrow. There is no more important task that we collectively face. Thank you staff and thank you families. I, for one, am proud and honored to be in such incredible company.

Patrick F. Sheedy III

Montessori News



Check It Out!

- RMS Community Profiles
- PTSA Happenings
- Ideas for healthy eating
- Letter from the Director
- Annual Campaign Update

**2007-08
Board of Directors**

- Jeff Piepho
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- Bryan Neel
- Richard Wright
- Jackie Emery
- Sarah Field
- Todd Humphrey
- Janine Yanisch
- Zelalem Temesgen
- Nathan Hauber
- Michele Bleskan
- Sherry Jester
- Patrick F. Sheedy III

Springtime Revelry—2008

By Marina Ramirez de Berglund



As a parent of a 5-year old boy, I usually have very limited opportunities for an evening on the town while doing something for the community. The RMS Springtime Revelry gave me a chance to do both. I attended my first one in 2007 and I had a blast!

For those of you who are new to the school or have not yet attended a Revelry, this is what to expect: **A Saturday evening dinner, auction and dance on April 26, 2008, at the beautiful**

Rochester Golf and Country Club.

This year's theme is "Misplaced Mardi Gras," so you will see (and wear!) masks. You can mingle with other parents, Guides, specialists, RMS staff, and friends, have a great New Orleans theme dinner and participate in both a silent and a live auction. Then you can dance Dixieland-style into the night!

I think that I talked to more RMS folks that night than I had met for an entire year at school. We raised **\$17,000** for the outdoor environment

last year; we hope to be able to raise as much or more this year.

If you have a special talent, would like to donate something interesting, or know some cool business in town that might, please contact us!

Contact:
Marina Ramirez de Berglund
Lisa-Ann Wuermsler
Springtime Revelry 2008 Co-Chairs

Ramirezalvarado.marina@mayo.edu

RMS Writer's Cafe

The Writer's Café is an opportunity for the E1 & E2 students to share what they have been learning and doing in their studies.

The E1 Cafe' was held on February 4th, 2008. The stories presented by the students were the result of LOTS of hard work. Each stu-

dent takes their piece through various stages in order for it to be like what was heard at Writer's Café. In the process, they practice what they have learned about the English language as well as learning new concepts about grammar, punctuation, and spelling.

In Spanish, the students have been building their vocabulary and understanding of both the Spanish language and culture through games, songs, and dance. The songs, dances, and readings shared represent a small sample of their hard work.

(Continued on page 2)

PTSA Happenings

PTSA Meetings are held on the second Thursday of the month at **9 am** in the school library unless otherwise notified via school mailings.

There are many opportunities still open for you to volunteer! Just contact Sherry or Juli for information.

SCHOLASTIC BOOK FAIR

The Scholastic book fair is set for the week of **March 24-28, 2008**.

The fair will open before drop-off and after pick up (both at lunch-time and at 3:00) and from 8:00-3:00 on Friday, March 28th, during conferences.

There will be pizza available for purchase after school Monday so please stop by after pickup, have a snack, and read for a bit.

All proceeds go to RMS library.

Please email jen25000@yahoo.com if you can volunteer for a slot or two.

RUMMAGE SALE

The Rummage Sale has been cancelled for Spring, 2008.

WINTER GATHERING

The Winter Gathering at Quarry Hill was a great success. Approximately 70 RMS parents, students, and teachers enjoyed

learning about turtles and taking a walk around the pond. It was a great day to be outside, and many folks decided to try cross country skiing and snow shoeing as well! Thanks to **Jenny Shapiro** for coordinating this special day for the RMS community

PTSA CONTACTS:

Sherry Jester:
hcloft@charter.net
Juli Gifford:
jagiff@hotmail.com

Writer's Cafe

(continued from page 1)

On January 31, the E2 class presented a night of "Native American Storytelling". The children worked for several months on writing an essay about a Native American tribe of their choice. In addition to reading their essays, the children performed several traditional songs and dances from various tribes. The children created drums to use, and they decorated shirts by

adding beads and dying them in tea. To end the night, the children performed a skit about one Native American legend, "How Coyote Stole Fire." The story explains how the wise coyote brings the gift of fire to man.



Writer's Café 2008

Submission deadline for the May newsletter is:
APRIL 8TH, 2008

EMAIL:
sarahafield@hotmail.com
jmy@charter.net

Montessori Consultant Visits RMS

For the first time in many years a prominent figure in Montessori education came to our community to work with the staff, the parents, and administration.

The staff enjoyed a workshop with Patricia Donohue Shortridge on Feb. 18th that covered a wide range of topics. We started by considering the plethora of social phenomena that most children face today – video and TV saturation, excessive activities leading to little unstructured time, infrequent contact with nature, two working parents, high divorce rate, sex and drugs at earlier ages, increased academic pressure, etc. Then, Donohue asked us to go beyond the surface challenges of the child in modern society and turn to the quest for their true nature. We revisited the fundamental skill required to meet this challenge, that

of observation. We realized observations can easily be compromised by the lenses of our own life situation. Our first challenge then becomes internal reflection and personal introspection. We concluded the day by considering the dynamics of our professional relationships, explored the important contributions made by each individual, and probed effective communication strategies.

That evening Donohue led a session for parents, which over 60 attended. Donohue focused on the changes that occur in children as they develop and the related challenges for parents and guardians. Sound Montessori Theory was used to ground specific issues that attendees brought up and an array of ideas were offered for children of all ages. The parent evening was a great success and we hope to have such speakers

address us in the future.

Donohue's final day was spent observing in several classrooms and consulting with Patrick on administrative issues ranging from specific practices at the school to general considerations of personal leadership. This day was an important culmination of two days of great learning for the RMS community!

Donohue openly shared her e-mail with all and is open to questions, big or small, from the RMS community.

pds@pdonohueshortridge.com

Supporting Your Child Through the Transitions between the Planes of Development

- Understand that the transition is from one developmental plane to another rather than from one grade to another; a process rather than a date in time
- Be aware of your child's physical and emotional disequilibrium
- Provide consistency and routine
- Be available for increased emotional support
- Take care of yourself
- Show confidence that your child will navigate this transition successfully

Provided by P. Donohue Shortridge

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Thanks to Jay Maier & team for the donation of wood chips to the Outdoor Environment!

Meet Andy Saunders (E1 Guide)

Name: Andy Saunders

home with Melissa (doesn't happen too often)

Reason for being at RMS: Personally, it seems so obvious how beneficial a Montessori education can be for children, and I enjoy being able to guide each child in their education.

Family members: Melissa (spouse), Isabel (daughter), and Otis (cat)

Packers or Vikings? Vikings

Chocolate, vanilla, or pistachio? Chocolate

Role at RMS: Elementary Guide

Hobbies/Interests: Listening to music of all kinds, movies, sports, being able to relax at

Favorite book: Angels and Demons by Dan Brown

Meet Todd Humphrey (Board Member, Parent)

Family members: Cari, Hanna, Dane (E1)

Chocolate, vanilla, or pistachio? Vanilla with hot fudge and fresh raspberries

Job: Self-employed. I help people find creative solutions to their problems

Favorite book: Joshwa

Hobbies/Interests: Packers fan, boating, Star Trek the Next Generation

Reason for being at RMS: Fertilizing a child's growth with Montessori education can change the world

Packers or Vikings? Packers

What's Happening with RMS Alumni

Michael Poeschla

The Rochester Public School District Spelling Bee was held on Friday, January 4, 2008 at the Southeast Service Cooperative Building in Rochester. Michael was the 1st place winner!

the Southeast Minnesota Regional Spelling Bee on February 19, 2008. Seventy-one students from southeastern Minnesota competed, and four students advanced to the Multi-Region/State Spelling Bee in St. Cloud. Michael did not advance but had fun competing.

Watch for a special "RMS Class of 2008" section in the May newsletter!

If you have stories you would like share about RMS alumni, please sent email to Janine Yanisch, jmy@charter.net

Thirty three students representing Friedell, John Adams, Kellogg, Willow Creek Middle Schools and Lincoln K-8 Choice Schools participated in this event.

Four students advanced to

Healthy Diets, Healthy Families

As a follow up to the nutrition article in the December 2007 newsletter, we thought it would be helpful to give suggestions for healthy choices that you could include in your diet.

The following are examples given by Maggi Adamek, speaker on nutrition at the Montessori conference in St. Paul:

Breakfast

- Eggs and hashbrowns
- Sausages & wholegrain toast with nut butter and fruit spread
- Shakes (fruit and protein)

Lunch

- Grilled cheese sandwich and tomato soup (whole grain bread)
- Turkey sandwich with carrot sticks (whole grain bread)
- Chili with homemade cornbread and salad
- Chicken or egg salad roll-ups
- Tacos
- Hardboiled eggs

Snacks

- Blue corn chips with salsa and cheese cubes
- Peanut butter & fruit spread on toast
- Hummus & whole wheat pita
- Peanut butter & apple slices
- Cheese cubes & carrot sticks
- Nuts & oranges
- Mozzarella cheese sticks and naturally popped popcorn (not microwave)
- Whole grain bagels with cream cheese or almond butter and fruit spread

Dinners

- Roast chicken with yams and salad
- Chicken stir fry with brown rice
- Homemade pizza with steamed broccoli
- Burgers on the grill w/whole grain buns and coleslaw
- Kabobs with rice and sautéed zucchini
- Bean and cheese quesadillas with tomato salad

Remember to include complex carbohydrates, protein, healthy fats, fruits, vegetables and dairy in your diet daily.

As a reminder, foods that do not help our bodies include:

- high fructose corn syrup
- transfats
- low quality protein
- processed milks
- liquid candy (soda, sweetened juices)
- MSG

Remember, when you check the labels on your food purchases, if the first 5 ingredients include hydrogenated oil, sugar, high fructose corn syrup, enriched flour and bleached flour, please consider an alternative product!

From the Board

The RMS Board meets on the 3rd Wed. of the month at 7:00 p.m. and parents are always welcome.

Currently, the board is looking at the 2008-09 calendar and budget, scheduling a retreat to look at long-range planning, and in general, is working on planning for the future of our school. Things are looking good!

\$20,500 Raised in Annual Campaign

A huge THANKS to the families that donated to the Annual Campaign! During 2007, 35% of RMS families donated, which is a participation high for the past five years. Donations ranged between \$5-\$5,000—every donation counts! The money helped to purchase the following:

Entrance rugs
Oak window sills and sealer
Outlets in various room
Additional storage in various rooms

THANK YOU!

Calendar 2008

MARCH

25-27-Book Fair(Scholastic)-PTSA Fundraiser
 28-NO SCHOOL
 31-April 4-SPRING BREAK

APRIL

10-PTSA Meeting 9:00 am
 16-Ginkgos Montessori Discussion 4-5pm
 17 - Willows Morning Visit
 18-Fun Friday
 26-Springtime Revelry

MAY

1-Oaks Morning Visit 10:30-11:30
 1-Birches "May Day" Celebration 10:30-11:45 (picnic snack/lunch)
 9-PTSA Meeting 9:00 am
 9-Staff Appreciation Car Wash
 9-Ginkgos Gathering 11-11:45 am
 13-Ginkgos Montessori Discussion 4-5pm
 16-Willows Spring Open House
 22 - Toddler Picnic 10:30-11:30
 22-23 - E2 Camping at Whitewater
 23 - E1 Lock-In
 30-End of Year Picnic

JUNE

4-Ribbon Ceremony
 5-Ginkgos Field Trip to Earth-Bellevue Farm
 5-Last Day of School
 6-9-Post Program for Staff

French and Chinese classes:

All meet on days that school is in session.

Mondays - 3:00-4:30 - Discovering Chinese (Children's House)

Tuesdays - 3:00-4:30 - Discovering French (Children's House)

Wednesdays - 3:30-5:00 - French Club (Elementary)

Thursdays - 3:30-5:00 - Chinese Club (Elementary)

Bookmobile - Every other Wednesday from 12:30-1:45.

Volunteer Appreciation at Quarry Hill

The very first RMS Volunteer Appreciation Night was held at Quarry Hill Nature Center on March 15th, 2008. 122 friends (students, parents, & staff) had the whole, wonderful facility, complete with the "Creatures of the Deep" special exhibit, to ourselves from 5:30-7:30.

There was barbeque and all of the fixings from Famous Dave's as well as cake. The event was held to celebrate the great spirit of giving and volunteerism in our community. Quarry Hill staff were very impressed with

the level of participation that RMS has - much higher than that of larger schools!

The children and their families really enjoyed the evening.

Thanks to all who put this successful fun event together: LuAnne Nicholson, Jackie Emery, Sherry Jester, Nathan Hauber, and especially Lori Forstie and several generations her clan! Thank you also to Anne-Marie Sykes and Nathan Hauber for donating the venue.



The beautiful view from RMS

Birth Announcements

Congratulations to the following RMS staff on the birth of their beautiful children:

Vicki Michael—Jonathan
 Andy Saunders—Isabel
 Tiffany Heath—Layla

Staff Committees

Rochester Montessori School staff, in addition to their regular job duties, have the opportunity to participate in a variety of staff committees. Each of these committees focuses on a specific area and allows staff to have more participation in the operation of the school. Currently there are 4 functioning committees that staff may sit on.

Staff Development (Patrick – Chair, Kate, Cheryl, Michelle) – this committee is responsible for identifying and providing for the training needs of the staff. They arrange for a minimum of 5 days of activities throughout the year. They are pretty much done for the year but have provided some wonderful opportunities this year.

Safe and Welcoming (Michelle – Chair, Cheryl, Sharri, Juliane, Connie, Vicki B., Kate, Patrick) – this committee is responsible for analyzing and modifying (if needed) the environment at the school to make it more welcoming to all and safer for the children. They have done a lot with internal rules for common space and are busily working on the outdoor environment issues.

Special Events (Sara and Sharri – Co-chairs, Vicki M., Niniek, Clarisse, Nikki, Patrick) – this committee is responsible for celebrating the successes of staff members...things like birthdays, graduations, marriage, children etc. They also organize support in

times of need. This year they were instrumental in serving up a week of fun after the first month of school, a time that is typically pretty draining on staff. Additionally, this group interfaces with the PTSA when necessary.

Summer School (Joan – Chair, Nikki, Julie, Sara, Clarisse, LuAnn, Patrick) – this committee organizes the majority of the summer programs, including scheduling, staff assignment, class topics, etc. They also analyze the Summer Programs and look for ways that it can be improved year after year.



RMS Wish List

Indoor:

- Thermal blinds for each room
- Tile the Janitor's room floor
- New computers for Elementary rooms
- Round tables (white plastic)
- Additional chairs for each room – replacements
- Portable, break-down stage for events
- New refrigerator for staff room

- Installation of the microwave vent in the kitchen



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THANK YOU TO MICHAEL FOR HIS DONATION OF TIME, TALENT & PHOTOS!!