



Montessori Matters



RMS observed Unity Day on 10/13. Orange was worn in recognition of those bullied and to bring about its end through teaching and nourishing peace.

In This Issue

- Congratulations Middle School1
- Meet the Oaks Team2
- Ending Hunger3
- Annual Fund4

CDs & Smart Board

E2 is creating a peace mobile out of old CDs and DVDs. Their work of art will go on display in the media center. Your old items are welcomed.

Please support our chances to win a Smart Board with HyVee shopping,

On the Calendar

October

- 18 Parents' Evening: To Praise or Not to Praise? What's the Question?
5:30-7:00 PM
- 19 Board Meeting 7:00 PM
- 20 E2 Coffee Shop
- 21 **No School:**
Professional Development Day

November

- 3-10 Scholastic Book Fair

To Praise or Not to Praise:

What's the Question? 10/18, 7:00 PM.

As parents, we are naturally inclined to praise our children. But if we are not careful, our praises, as well as our punishments, can have the opposite effect on children. Instead of engaging in more praise-worthy behavior, children may become less interested and less cooperative. If praise doesn't work as we expect, then what should we offer our children?

This topic is presented by Paul and takes place from 6:00 - 7:00 PM. Reservations for pizza dinner (5:30 - 6:00) and child care are due by October 14th. Music is provided by Emily Hill Lewis (Middle School teacher) and Kathleen Lamb (Suzuki teacher) and children who will present the Peace Song and drumming.

Congratulations to Middle School!

Bug-Blinging Bugscope Session Accepted

By Theo Thayib, Middle School Student

On 10/10/2011, the Middle School signed up for a Bugscope session. Bugscope is a program in which you look at bugs using a giant electron microscope! The microscope is at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. A few days later, on 10/13/2011, Bugscope accepted our application to do a session with them. Our application includes the desire to investigate spiders and how they eat. Also, Emily's Grandfather was an Entomologist, and helped discover a species of bee, the *Coelioxys Bisoncornua Hill*, which we would like to investigate further. Between now and our session, we have the option to preserve an insect to submit to the lab at Bugscope, as well as use their specimens. Our session is June 4, 2012 from 8:30 to 9:30 AM.

The people that control the microscope chat with students involved with the session. Their job is to make sure to prepare the microscope, and answer questions. The mi-

croscope is a Scanning Electron Microscope (SEM). The magnification can go above 200x. The microscope is as big as a desk!

You might be wondering how the microscope works. It works by directing high energy electrons to a point. The electrons go in a particular pattern: left to right, then up to down. That is why if you look at the microscope through the computer, you see the picture through that pattern. There are two types of electrons that are used: Primary electrons, and Secondary electrons. The primary electrons set off the secondary electrons. The secondary electrons are produced by using a cage called the Faraday Cage, which directs the secondary electrons to a point.

If you want to learn more about a Bugscope, or join our session, go to the following website. Our session is June 4, 2012 from 8:30 to 9:30 AM. Scroll through the website, and it should say some thing like this: "Lucky you! We are running a live session now!" Click on the link, and sign in as a guest!

<http://bugscope.beckman.illinois.edu/>

If you want to learn more about the SEM, go to the following website:

http://virtual.itg.uiuc.edu/training/EM_tutorial/#segment_1_1

Meet the Oaks

By Shannon McRaith

LuAnn is an assistant in the Oaks classroom as well as our P.E. Teacher. She has been an RMS assistant since 2000. She originally went into the field of education because she had a physical education teacher with a zest for life and a real passion for her work. In turn, this inspired LuAnn to be an inspiration for youth. She does this by staying active and enjoying life. Happening upon Montessori was a happy "bonus." She applied for the position of P.E. teacher at RMS and it came "with the extraordinary chance of learning and living the Montessori philosophy."

Although LuAnn works with all ages, she was asked about her work as a Children's House assistant and why she



Meet the Oaks Team (from left to right): LuAnn Nicholson, Nikki Brown, and Judy Jacobs.

believes the Montessori philosophy is so successful with this age.

LuAnn understands that the Montessori Method makes the child the center of learning. Everything about the Children's House allows the child the freedom to grow and learn at their own pace. It is a warm, loving environment filled with everything that a child needs to help them succeed.

LuAnn finds young children are honest in their feelings and actions. She finds this to be inspiring about working with this age group. *"A hug in the morning, an extended hand for a walk down the hall, the expression of joy on their faces when their work is finished, and many more things keep me coming back each day with anticipation. It's nice to have their unconditional trust and joy. I know I learn something from them each day we're together."*

LuAnn would like parents to know about children's abilities to do things independently and with joy. She feels that if you trust in the Montessori method, you will know that you are giving your child a wonderful beginning. "Montessori," said LuAnn, speaks to the needs of chil-

dren, and their needs are timeless."

LuAnn, originally from Iowa, currently lives in Rochester with her husband of 37 years, John. They have two sons who are both patent attorneys in California. When not at school, LuAnn likes to read, crochet, ride her bike and workout.

Judy is also an assistant in the Oaks classroom. She has been with RMS since 1982 and has worked in every area of the school: Toddlers, Children's House, Elementary 1 and 2. She said she chose Montessori because it is such a unique and amazing approach to the life of a child. It teaches independence and freedom. She has seen how much children absorb. She also loves that the materials are self-correcting.

Having worked with all age groups, Judy has come to understand the "planes of development." At different ages, children are meant to learn in specific ways. Judy marvels over just how "magical" this is.

Judy believes that every day is a new day, and each day in the classroom is different. She enjoys greeting the chil-





Children can build (left) the entire decimal systems (1 - 9,999) and computer sums such as (right) with those wonderful math materials

dren as they enter the room and watching them on the playground as they meet with children from other classrooms. She loves listening to the fun conversations the children have during lunch time.

Judy grew up on a farm near Atwater, MN with two older brothers and two younger brothers. She now lives in Rochester with her husband Lyle. Judy's daughter, son-in-law, and two granddaughters (Lyra, 5 and Nuala, almost 3) live in Portland, OR. Judy feels this is MUCH too far away. In her spare time Judy likes to listen to music of all kinds and frame more pictures of her granddaughters to put around her home!

Nikki, the Oaks classroom guide, has been with RMS for thirteen years. She originally came to RMS through a newspaper ad where she applied to be an assistant. Nikki didn't know what it meant to be a Montessori assistant. She only knew that she wanted to continue working with children, but not in the current day care setting where she was.

Nikki "absolutely fell in love with Montessori!" that year. She said, *"It felt like the perfect fit...from the philosophy and the materials to the children, families and staff. I worked for that year as an assistant and when the opportunity arose for me to start my training that summer, I took it!"* She has been a

guide in the Oaks classroom ever since.

She feels that part of Montessori's success is largely because the needs of the child haven't changed. Montessori developed and designed the philosophy and curriculum around those needs including engaging in purposeful work, movement, language, and order.

Nikki knows that Montessori empowers children to own their education. They choose when to do a work, where to do a work, and with whom. She sees the children blossom when they have the opportunity to make choices and to show you what they can do. Her favorite part of the day is catching a moment that could easily go unnoticed. For example, an older child puts his arm around one of the younger children to help her up the big hill; when a child sits quietly, concentrating with a book when there is so much going on around him or her; or when a child stops at a shelf to put a work back in the right spot just because they noticed.

Nikki loves the moments that make her stop and realize how much she can learn from children. She said, *"I once observed a child standing in front of another child who was crying. He was making faces, and I approached him. With concern in my voice, I asked him why he was making faces. He said when he makes funny faces at his baby sister, she always stops*

crying. At their core, children are peaceful beings (another reason Montessori works so well). I feel lucky to spend my days with them!"

Nikki grew up on a dairy farm in a small community by Fairmont, MN. She now lives in Rochester with her husband of 10 years, Tom. Their two "wonderfully energetic, loving" boys are Derek, a third year in E1, and Andrew, a toddler in Pinecones. Outside of school they stay busy with many sports activities. Tom is a basketball coach at John Marshall high school, and Derek participates in basketball, baseball and soccer. When they are not busy participating, they're watching and cheering on they're favorite local, college, and professional teams. When not cheering and rooting, Nikki enjoys "mom time" scrapbooking, shopping or spending time with friends.

**Ending Hunger,
November 17th at 5:30**

Our very own Travis Prinzing, potter extraordinaire, graciously volunteered to make 90 bowls for the children to glaze. These bowls will be sold on November 17th to raise money for Channel One a local food shelf and regional food bank that serves Southeast Minnesota and Western Wisconsin. For a minimum cash donation of \$15, you can take home soup, bread, crackers, corn chips,



Concentration is the moment of learning, and learning involves all at once discovering, understanding, and becoming self-disciplined or accomplished. Now I can do it! Now I am self-reliant.

and drinks along with the bowl.

A group of our E2 and Middle School students will volunteer this year at Channel One. While Channel One always needs people to help with various tasks, they greatly benefit from donated monies. Each donated dollar creates FIVE meals. We decided to hold our own RMS "Empty Bowls" fundraiser because the money we can give to Channel One will provide for so many.

Empty Bowls, an international grassroots effort to fight hunger, was created by The Imagine Render Group. The basic premise is simple: Potters, other craftspeople, educators and many others work with the community to create handcrafted bowls. Guests are invited to a simple meal of soup and bread. In exchange for a cash donation, guests are asked to keep a bowl as a reminder of all the empty bowls in the world. Please join with us on November 17th to help end hunger.

"Volunteering is the ultimate exercise in democracy. You vote in elections once a year but when you volunteer, you vote everyday about the kind of community you want to live in."

The Annual Fund

The Annual Fund is the most significant fundraising activity of the year. Our theme this year is simply, ***Books and Beyond: Request, Rebuild, and Replace.*** This theme reflects a simple truth: While we regularly budget classroom and media center funds, the School experiences the cumulative effects of decades of use. We need to rebuild our media center and replace classroom furniture and Montessori materials.

Our goal is to raise \$25,000 with 100% participation from our current families as well as expanded support from alumni families, grandparents, friends, faculty, and staff.

The Annual Fund is crucial in helping to make the School's media center project complete. Your contribution also helps to pay for educational programs, resources, and many other things that enhance the children's day-to-day experience. This year's focus is to fill our media center with furniture, books and computers, as well as to refurbish much of the well-loved furniture and materials that the classrooms have used for over 30 years.

We encourage every family at RMS to make our School a priority for your char-

itable giving. Each and every gift is greatly appreciated and welcomed.



A kindergartner's rainbow drawing of the colored tablets.

