

# The Montessori Schoolhouse

*35th Anniversary 1974-2009*

**Newsletter: April-May, 2010**

www.themontessorischoolhouse.com

## DEAR FAMILIES—

We so enjoyed seeing you all at our **Open House** last month. It is always a pleasure to exhibit our students' academic and art work as well as some of the extraordinary hands-on materials that fill our classroom shelves. We received a lot of positive feedback after the lively Question & Answer session and will conduct another at our Open House in September.

We also value the opportunity to meet with you at our **Parent Conferences**, to share stories of your children's achievements and successes in the classroom.

Our classrooms, as usual, have been teeming with activity, test preparation, great subjects and vital friendships. Here's just a sample:

### Lower Elementary

Our Lower Elementary classroom is coming to the end of a very productive and joyful year. After exploring all the multi-faceted **biomes** of **Africa**, we segued into our own exotic biome, the **Sonoran Desert**. Our **object basket** is loaded with examples of our **flora** and **fauna**, from **agave** to **bobcats** to **javelina** to **scorpions**. (Come in and see!) This has opened the door to examining and **dissecting** the **Parts of a Flower**, **Cactus Fruit Harvesting** and studying the stunning work of **Georgia O'Keefe**, the great painter of the Southwest.

We will be finishing up the year with **Spring Projects** and **Poetry**, among other things . . . .

### Lunch in the Lower Elementary Classroom

We would love to see you all one more time this school year and so—**please join us—pack a sack lunch and join your student in Lower Elementary for lunch**

on Wednesday, May 26<sup>th</sup>, from 12-1:00 p.m. We hope you can make it!

### Upper Elementary

The teachers and students are relieved to have completed five days of **AIMS** testing and are happy to get back to the work at hand. Recently we wrapped up a unit on the **Early American Colonies** and are now winding down our **chemistry** unit, which focused on the **elements** and **natural cycles** (water, carbon, nitrogen . . .).

We also recently "travelled" to the **People's Republic of China**, where we are now engaged in the study of both the ancient and modern aspects of this fascinating nation. During the final weeks of school we will be studying China in-depth, including **culture**, **geography**, **history and art**, with a special emphasis on the many innovations and **inventions** of the Chinese mind and imagination.

We will also be examining the **life cycle** of many animal species and in keeping with our studies of China, we will **raise silkworms** and unravel the **mystery of silk**.

Be on the lookout for our spring **project notices** which will give your student several choices for the end of year project. We look forward to seeing our students' completed projects, which will all be due by **Monday, May 17<sup>th</sup>**.

### Potluck in the Upper Elementary Classroom

And finally, we'll conclude our study of China with a **Parent-Child Pot Luck lunch during the last week of school**. Notices will go out well in advance so as many of you as possible (hopefully, all!) can attend. **Look for the date!**

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## EDUCATION FUNDING CUTS

Our legislators and Governor are making critical decisions about the budget deficit and cuts to education which are directly affecting our school. As parents and voters, it's up to you to decide if you agree with these decisions. However you feel, you have the right to contact your representatives about your feelings and to **VOTE on the sales tax referendum on May 18.**

## CHESS MOVES

Congratulations to the Montessori Schoolhouse **Chess teams** and our chess **Coach, Josh Leonard**, for their amazing success in the Regional Tournaments during March—**2<sup>nd</sup> Place** in the **1<sup>st</sup> Regional Qualifier** and **1<sup>st</sup> Place** in the **2<sup>nd</sup> Regional Qualifier!** We also want to thank **Dana Duclo**, our wonderful Upper Elementary Co-Teacher (and Spanish teacher), for volunteering all year with our chess program at Ft. Lowell. *Muchas gracias, Dana.*

## The 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue School

As those of you who have children at our 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue School already know, **Dolores** and **Summer** and the amazing staff have created a truly enchanting learning environment for our Primary students. The beautifully crafted and wide assortment of hands-on materials never fails to engage students (and parents) in the excitement of learning. Take a minute to see the **Rain Forest Corner** created by **Carol Schumacher**, who teaches in the Afterschool Program with **Ronwyn**. It is well worth your time.

## Summer Art Camp

We are excited to offer a fun-filled schedule of our Art & Science blend starting with Georgia O'Keefe and the Sonoran Desert. This means we will be learning about the great artist as well as studying the flora and fauna of the desert. Please see our Art Camp Flier for all the details.

A SUGGESTION: we would love to have more **elementary students** join us for at least a week or two. So we suggest that each elementary student **sign up with a friend.** The curriculum is suitable for all ages and everyone will have a great time if they have a buddy with whom to work.

Our **teachers** for **Summer Camp** will be: **Mandy & Hannah Ebner**, mornings; **Ronwyn, Summer** and **Hannah Bell** in the afternoon. ☺ Please turn in your enrollment forms to Rosemary as soon as you know your schedules.

## Testing

Stanford 10 Testing for Lower Elementary 2<sup>nd</sup> Grade and AIMS testing for all Upper Elementary students is now complete for 2010. Thank you for your child's attendance and punctuality. The Lower Elementary students fully enjoyed some "brain food" and a rare chance to experience standardized testing.

## Overheard:

Mani, in Lower Elementary, came up to be checked off for the **Division Box**, a simple wooden box filled with division problems and answers. He had been working steadily for nearly an hour:

"That was so much fun I could hardly stop!" he said.

Who knew?

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And this: Isobel, excited to be finishing her contract: "All I have left is 'Other'!"

## Parenting

Amidst all the points about setting limits, not over-attending, how to encourage, etc., etc., there is this one simple truth: Enjoy your children.

Enjoy their observations, opinions, talents and good company. Have fun, talk, play and laugh. They will know you enjoy them and want to be with them and that is the best message of all. Have a great summer together, everyone.

## THANK YOU NOTES:

**Valerie** and **Andrew Greenhill** spearheaded the new **vegetable garden** on the west side of the playground and **Tim Helm**, an electrical contractor and Lower Elementary parent, configured an animal-friendly device to protect the garden. Thank you **Valerie, Andrew** and **Tim!**

Another big **thank you** goes out to all of you who brought such **wonderful, healthy & homemade snacks** throughout the year.

A very appreciative *Thank You* to **Arlene Cocio** for her family's generous contribution of the **beautiful new Chess T-shirts** and **Polo Shirts** for the chess team.

Thank you, again, to our **tax credit contributors** who enabled our students to continue enjoying **chess, piano, theater arts, violin, minstrel, cooperative sports and yoga**. These enrichment activities would not be possible without your support.

We cannot finish this school year without extending another great big thank you to **Sarah Van Pelt, Traffic Captain**, for her steady and cheerful help with afterschool pick-up all through the endless road work on Mountain Avenue.

And thank you, **everyone**, for your patience and care as you navigate in and out every day.

**Have a great summer!**

**See you August 18<sup>th</sup>!**

*Regine and staff*

