

The Montessori Schoolhouse

Celebrating our 37th School Year

Newsletter: January-February, 2011

www.themontessorischoolhouse.com

Dear Families—

After recent sad events in Tucson, we are happy to be in our classrooms, watching with renewed joy the work and diligent progress of our students. Some of our recent studies:

Lower Elementary

We have been immersed in a **Creative Writing** sequence which has been bearing amazing fruit. The children first learned about **adjectives, adverbs** and **Elements of a Story** and then worked on a series of **Fill-in Stories**. Now they are in the process of writing their own (fictional) short stories, have portfolios and the results have been tremendous. They are enjoying their own creative process immensely.

We are also studying **Human Anatomy**, including the amazing **X-Ray Skeleton**, the **Circulatory System** and the **History of Medicine**.

Because we like as often as possible to demonstrate the context of subjects, we also teach the **History of Money** as we learn the **mathematics of money**. The students love *paying* for snack every day (e.g., goldfish and apples—37 cents; homemade muffins--\$1.25!) Ask your child about our **Sushi Restaurant**.

Upper Elementary

After finishing up our unit on **Explorers** with a fast-paced **trivia contest**, we are charging forward into the **American Revolution!** Our previous unit set the stage for the class to understand why and how colonies were formed and now we are examining the transition of the **13 Colonies** into an independent new nation. Aided by an **American History Timeline**, **object baskets** containing relevant artifacts from the era and a variety of lessons, our students will take a close-up look at

Patriots of the time period and will develop a basic understanding of the **way government functions**.

In **Science**, we are delving into the **depths of the Earth** and re-emerging on the other side of the planet's surface! Olive is leading the class through lessons beginning with the **Cosmic Origins of the Earth**, the **Layers of the Earth**, an introduction to the **Earth's Geology** and **Landforms** and the factors responsible for shaping the land around us.

The effects of **Glaciation, Rifts** and the action of **Wind** and **Water** on our environment are some of the dynamic topics that lie ahead. Along with **History** and **Science**, on the **Math** front we are engaged in **long division** along with **Euler Circuits**. **Creative Writing** continues as a regular practice and in-depth **literary analysis** is just around the corner.

It's hard to believe we're half-way through the year, but time flies when learning is so much fun.

Let's Do Lunch

I have been acutely aware of not being able to see you all as much as we did before the Mountain Avenue road work forced us to change our drop-off and pick-up format. So, let's have another **Parent Luncheon!** Bring a sack lunch and join us with your student in **Lower Elementary from noon to 1:00 p.m. on Thursday, February 10.**

We look forward to seeing you all for a little picnic. Since this is February, should the weather change for the worse, we will reschedule.

Please park 1/2 block north on Mountain Avenue at the Waters of Life Church or on the north end of the parking area at Carlos' Salon, across the street.

Other Important Dates

Rodeo Holiday:

Th. & Fri., Feb. 24 & 25 (School closed)

Open House:

Wednesday, March 9, 4:30-6 p.m.

Come and enjoy your student's work and portfolios.

Spring Break:

March 21-25 (School Closed)

Spring AIMS; Stanford 10 Testing:

Day 1, Grade 5, April 11: Writing

Day 1, Grade 4, April 11: Science

Day 2, 3, 4: Grades 3-5: Reading & Math

Day 2: April 12; Day 3: April 13;

Day 4: April 14

Test Tips: Please be sure your child is rested and has a nice breakfast on test days. We'll do all the rest! Studies show that anxiety about testing lowers performance; and confidence raises performance. We are confident and so are the students.

More Alumni Adventures

From time to time we note activities and accomplishments of former Schoolhouse students. Here are a few more:

River Estes—Nonviolence Award

Catherine Truelson—Space Award

Christina White—Grand Prize

All three students attend *Paolo Freire Middle School* and were recognized at the Fall "Spirit of Intercession" Awards;

Nizhone Hickman (*Sonoran Science Academy*) led his 3-student team to the regional finals in the "Future City Competition" including schools from 133 cities from Arizona, California and New Mexico. Nizhone's school was one of only two Tucson schools to make the finals;

Amy Sizer (*Sonoran Science Academy*) On November 11, Amy sang the National Anthem at the commencement ceremony of the 15th Annual Arizona Charter School Conference, held in Phoenix, Arizona;

Alex Weeks (*Green Fields School*) participated in the Summer Science Innovation Camp and his proposal for a "Microbe in Space" will be on the next NASA space launch!!!

Tax Credit Collections

We wish to extend our heart-felt thanks to all of you who supported our extra-curricular programs with your tax credit payments. As we face even further funding cuts, these contributions ensure that our wonderful activities and staff can continue full strength. Your receipts will be coming in the mail within a week.

PARENTING TIP: It's fun to create opportunities for your child to handle *monetary transactions*. She/he can pay for a sandwich, make change for allowance or keep accounts of their own savings. Ask for help occasionally counting out money when purchasing something in a store—your child will enjoy this process and learn lots of useful math.

OVERHEARD:

In the 6th Avenue Primary Class, Luis Andres, after a Circle presentation:

"I can't wait to get home and tell my parents that I'm a vertebrate!"

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*So, to all you  
Vertebrates out  
there—See You Soon!*

*Regine and staff*