

Upper Elementary

by Lucy Gibson and Cara Maas

Upper Elementary has recently found a way to save money on our leopard gecko's food – by harvesting grubs. We found a rotten stump on the playground and some students began collecting grubs by breaking up the stump with a hammer. Roxy, our leopard gecko, seems to be enjoying them!

In history we have recently learned about Christopher Columbus, Native Americans, the Pilgrims, and the First Thanksgiving. In U.S. history, we are learning about the Vietnam War and the Nixon presidency. Some interesting facts include Nixon wiretapping the telephone calls of journalists and government officials, along with the help of his Secretary of State, Henry Kissinger.

In Spanish, we had a Thanksgiving potluck. We sadly had to say goodbye to Señora Nitzia (AKA "Señora Nini"). Señora Nitzia will be sorely missed, but we wish her good luck at the University of South Carolina. We gave a warm welcome to our new Spanish teacher Ms. Sarah Barnett.

For this month's community meal, we had grilled chicken, bow tie pasta, steamed broccoli, salt and vinegar chips, and mini cupcakes with vanilla buttercream frosting. Muy yum!



Look closely to find **ten** mini MSC Chicken and Trees like this one throughout this newsletter!



A Monthly Look Into the Montessori School of Columbia

Montessori Matters

Upcoming Events

- Rising 6th Grade Information Session: December 11
- Rising Lower and Upper Elementary Information Session: December 12
- Winter Break: December 21 through January 3
- Re-enrollment Contracts: Distributed January 19 and due to office by February 2

Development News

Save the Date for the MSC Auction

Friday, March 15, 2024, 7-11pm

Please add the MSC Auction to your calendar, and keep an eye out for the Auction Theme reveal! This year, we are adding much more food with new catering, fun drink choices (including non-alcoholic drinks), and a host of fun surprises that will make this a night to remember.

Spread the word! This adults-only event is not limited to MSC parents and staff. All money raised during our annual auction goes directly to support our children's education including classroom materials, teacher salaries, field trips, and tuition assistance.

How can you help make the auction a success? **Volunteer, donate, sponsor, and attend!** Contact Michael Drennan at development@montessoricolumbia.com or (803) 888-1755.

Items from local businesses will be up for bids, and we LOVE family involvement. Do you have a skill, trade, or talent you'd like to **DONATE** to the auction? Services, memberships, concert tickets, a vacation home stay, art— few things are off limits! Are you a small business owner who can donate a session, a gift card, or an item?

Would your family or business like to **SPONSOR** the event? We'd love to hear from you! Sponsorship opportunities are available at all levels!



We are happy to accept donations via Venmo. Enter what the funds are for in the Venmo note field.

Thank you to the families and friends who have donated to our Annual Fund so far!



Primary

As the first semester comes to a close, we take time to reflect and admire how much growth has taken place. Children that, in August, were hesitant or tearful in morning drop off are now chatty and checking in on close friends. Children are well versed in their routines and enjoy working in what is now a familiar and comforting environment. Children grow so much over the Primary years. On the playground, teachers look at each other in awe, because sometimes, it still catches us off guard how quickly they grow.

November was filled with self-reflection, recognition, and gratitude. We took time to reflect on how we affect the world and others around us. Just before the Fall Break, the Kindergarten and other non-napping students from all three classrooms worked together to cook family style dishes and enjoy a Feast of Gratitude. This was a beautiful experience for all.

As we move into December, the temperatures have become cooler, and Primary students have been gaining more opportunities to practice the Practical Life skill of putting on jackets. We will be welcoming guests into our classrooms before our Winter Break to share with us about different holiday traditions and celebrations. We are all excited for these special learning experiences. As always, thank you for your continued support!

"Whoever touches the life of a child touches the most sensitive point of a whole, which has roots in the most distant past and climbs toward the infinite future." - Maria Montessori

Enrichment News

🌱 We are sad to see Ms. Nitzia go, but we are happy for her new adventure, starting a job at the University of South Carolina. We welcome Ms. Sarah Barnett as our new Spanish teacher.

🌱 Ms. Cat will be leading Afterschool Choir, starting January 11th. This is for students in 1st through 6th grades and will take place Thursdays from 2:45 to 3:45pm in building B. It is \$80 per month. Email brittney@montessoricolumbia.com to register before December 15.

🌱 Think Move Chess Academy will be offering chess, 2:45pm-3:45pm, starting January 26th and ending May 10th. Class will be held on Fridays with off days on 2/9, 3/8, 3/22, and 4/5. Cost will be \$99 for 6 weeks or \$179 for 12 weeks. To register or pay, visit <https://www.thinkmovechess.com>.

Palmetto

Students in the Palmetto Class are continuing to build on their writing skills with our weekly Writers' Workshops. Grade-level groups are practicing with a variety of exercises and are becoming more comfortable with the craft of writing, both in creative ways and to communicate information about their own learning. We are continuing our work with the Second Great Lesson, the Coming of Life, by introducing one period at a time from our Timeline of Life.

We have spent a little more time these past few weeks in the Carboniferous Period (just imagine giant insects buzzing around in swampy forests of giant ferns!) and will wrap up the Paleozoic Era next week with our review of the Permian Period. With every period, we have seen some species become extinct if they are unable to adapt to changing conditions, a theme that will continue throughout our study.

We have also been spending time considering the Fundamental Needs of Humans, another of the big ideas around which the Montessori elementary curriculum is organized. Several of our students have started to notice connections between their own independent research interests and this idea of fundamental needs, and they are planning with peers about ways we may be able to incorporate these larger themes into their own work.

Just this week the students decided to embark on yet another project, the opportunity to determine who (what) will be our next class pet. As you know, our well-loved Syrian hamster Coconut passed away of natural causes earlier in the year, and this week the children proposed a series of inquiries to help choose a new pet. Rather than a simple vote, the students have organized themselves into research teams to learn about the pros and cons of each animal that has been proposed as a class pet. (To their credit, they all immediately rejected Mr. Michael's suggestion of a King Cobra!) We are gathering books and other information sources now and are looking forward to learning about the characteristics that will make a good class pet. 🌱

Magnolia

by Vivek and Colton (Magnolia Room Third Graders)

Our class has been doing the TimeLine of Life. There are three eras. They are Paleozoic, Mesozoic, and Cenozoic. This month we studied the Paleozoic. and finished it. We read books about each period and looked at fossils. The second graders have done body functions of birds and mammals. We have been looking into the microscope to see slides of bone cells, frog blood, human blood cells, leaf stomas, human squamous epithelium, and insect legs. The second and third graders did parts of plant cells and animal cells. The first graders learned about parts of a plant and are studying the different triangles and quadrilaterals in geometry. We have two groups of third grade geometry. One of our groups has been measuring angles of triangles. The other group is learning about the parts of a circle and the relationship of a circle to a straight line or another circle. The third graders got geometric multiplication this month. Second graders are using the small and large bead frames. The first graders are working on Golden Beads and stamp games. We look forward to sharing with you next time!



There is a great sense of community within the Montessori classroom, where children of differing ages work together in an atmosphere of cooperation rather than competitiveness. There is respect for the environment and for the individuals within it, which comes through experience of freedom within the community."

🌱 - Dr. Maria Montessori

