

October 2024



# A Monthly Look Into the Montessori School of Columbia Montessori Matters

## Upcoming Events

- October 11-** Parent Conferences; No School. Childcare available during your conference
- October 16-** Primary Fall Watch Me Work Night
- October 18-** Montessori Mile and Fall Festival
- October 19-** Fall Book Fair at All Good Books
- October 22, 23, 24-** Individual and MSC Sibling photos.
- October 25, 26-** Rescheduled Elementary Community Camping Experience at Sesquicentennial Park
- October 31-** Elementary Classes Spanish Class Lunch for Dia de los Muertos

## Development News

Join us for the annual Montessori Mile and Fall Festival on **Friday, October 18th** on campus from **5:30pm to 8:30pm**. Thank you for assisting your student to collect donations from friends and family members in exchange for walking a mile. During the Montessori Mile, students and parents can complete three laps around the residential blocks adjacent to the school. Afterwards, the Fall Festival features music, face painting, lawn games, dinner for \$10 a person, and other fun for the whole school community.

Scan the QR Code below to read more about the event, log donations, and sign up to volunteer during the event. We are happy to accept donations for the Mile via Venmo, cash, or check. MSC's Venmo QR Code is on all of the forms. Kindly enter the student's name and "Mile" in the Venmo note field and on all donations. The Venmo four digit code is '7014'.

**MSC is hosting a Book Fair this Fall!**

**Need to Read with MSC**

**Saturday, October 19, 2024, 10am to 12pm**

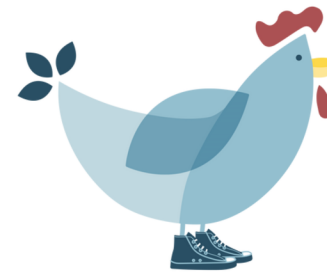
**All Good Books in Five Points (734 Harden St, 29205)**

Please join us for a fun morning of book readings for kids, book browsing, and refreshments for sale. Support reading at MSC and buy a book for your child's classroom from the MSC display table.

- All Good Books is generously donating 10% of all sales from the whole day (Saturday, 10/19) to MSC.
- MSC teachers and parents will read to students from 10am to 11am.
- We look forward to seeing you and your family at this fun event in support of reading!

You can support reading at MSC even if you can't attend the event by making a [donation via Venmo](#) or sending cash or check to the MSC administration office. Please enter "Book Fair" in the note field. If Venmo asks for the last 4 digits of our phone number, enter '7014'.

As a part of our cultural curriculum, we love to have family and community members give classroom presentations about their cultures, occupations, and special interests. If you are interested in presenting about your unique lived experience, reach out to a member of the admin office or your student's teacher to discuss!



Find ten Montessori Mile chickens in this issue of Montessori Matters!

## Upper Elementary

By Zoe Hartman

Hello, and welcome to the Upper Elementary newsletter! My name is Zoe, and I have been given the job of telling you about current events in Upper El.

First off, there was Hurricane Helene, which started mainly in Florida, but affected Columbia in surprising ways. For starters, everyone felt the impact of the power outage caused by the storms blowing off Hurricane Helene, no matter if you lost power for four days or four hours. Another powerful effect of Hurricane Helene was messy lawns. Messy, messy lawns! Some people even had entire trees fall down. It wasn't pretty, but on the plus side, everyone was back to school by Monday. (Well, most people...)

This leads nicely to our second subject, Covid-19. Most people aren't excited to hear that a lot of people are getting Covid again. So, just a friendly reminder to students and families - wash those hands!

Next up is our community meal, which our classmates (and teachers!) added a creative twist to by making breakfast for lunch! We prepared a meal of: breakfast burritos, French toast, yogurt parfaits, hash browns, and hot chocolate. The students enjoyed preparing lunch on what was a very wet day!

Also coming up soon is our Little Free Pantry food drive (located at Oceola and South Maple Streets). Be sure to donate, if you are able, at our Montessori Mile event on Friday, October 18, or in the morning car line - look out for our Upper El volunteers. Keep an eye out for recommended donations.

Many thanks, and please donate if you are able!





# Primary 1

September was filled with excitement. We welcomed a new student from Germany, our Kindergarteners went on their very first field trip, and our region weathered a hurricane and all its aftermath. We are grateful that MSC came out unscathed and our Primary 1 community stayed safe throughout.

We are looking forward to our busy month of October. We kicked it off with a visit from Lisa Wheeler, who shared about the Jewish celebration of Rosh Hashanah. She read a story about the Jewish New Year, spoke to what her family does to celebrate, and shared some well-wishing foods traditionally eaten: apples with honey to wish for a sweet and fruitful new year and a loaf of round challah to represent the cycle of life and creation.

Our first Conference Day of the year will be Friday, October 11. While there will be no school for students, primary assistants will be on the playground to be with your MSC students during your conference, should you need to bring them. If you have not signed up, you may find the link in our class correspondence. On the following Wednesday, October 16, we will have our first Watch Me Work Night. You may find the Primary Fall Watch Me Work Sign Up on the Parent Portal. Thursday, October 17, all MSC Kindergarteners will walk to Owen's Field to practice for the Montessori Mile, held on Friday, October 18th. Our MSC Fall Festival will immediately follow the Montessori Mile that evening. Our School Book Fair is Saturday, October 19 at All Good Books. We hope to see you all there! To close out the month of October, we will have a Columbia Marionette Theatre dental awareness show at MSC for all Primary students on October 31.

During this season of Fall, we will continue our focus on respect and gratitude. We will read books and have classroom discussions around recognizing the things that bring us joy and support us as. Further, we will discuss how we can acknowledge and express gratitude for even the smallest of these things. Our community will continue to develop and nourish an appreciation for our environment and each other.

Thank you all for your support,  
Ms. Sunshine

**“The greatest gifts we can give our children are the roots of responsibility and the wings of independence.” – Dr. Maria Montessori**



# Primary 2

Hello, everyone! We are doing great things in Primary 2. As we continue to adapt to the rules and expectations of our classroom, I can see our class starting to *normalize*. Everyone is working on newly presented lessons, the children are learning, and work time is becoming more productive. Last month, we learned about North America. There was so much to learn about our continent, and this month we are learning all about South Carolina, specifically. Our pumpkin plants are growing in our garden. We have observed several bright yellow blooms. Hopefully, we get to see a baby pumpkin soon. The sweet potatoes that the 3K students planted last month appear to be thriving, and the students are very excited. We are planning to make sweet potato pie after we harvest our sweet potatoes. Moving into this season and more autumnal weather, we are hoping for donations of the following items: maize, Mums, used manila folders we can recycle for our pin punching lesson, old greeting cards for sewing lessons, and pumpkins in a variety of colors and sizes. Additionally, please make sure that if clothes are sent home for your student, a fresh, full set of clothes which is appropriate for the weather is returned the following day. Thank you for working as a team with us to support your child's educational journey. We are looking forward to the eventful continuation of October!

## Important Dates for October:

- Primary 2 Show and Tell every Friday
- 5K Visits the MSC Library each Thursday
- Wednesday, October 16- Primary Watch Me Work Evening Event
- Friday, October 11- Parent Teacher Conferences (No School for Students)
- Thursday, October 17- 5K Walking Field Trip to Owens Field Park
- Thursday, October 31- Dentist Puppet Show (on Campus)

## Brief Reminders:

- When preparing lunch for your child, keep in mind that lunch time is thirty minutes long and is followed by playtime. If a significant amount of food is leftover each day, please consider packing a smaller portion of each item (e.g. a half sandwich instead of whole). Remember to send all the necessary eating utensils with your child (napkins, a spoon or fork, etc.).

Maria Montessori said, **“Our task toward children is not only to nourish them physically or even intellectually, but also to give them the opportunity to develop their own faculties.”**

# Primary 3

## Happy Autumn from Primary 3!

September flew by, literally! With Helene in the last few days of the month, and the resounding effects have been a sense of inquiry and resilience in the children, as they spoke with empathy and wonder, helped clean up the campus, and wished thoughts of hope and healing to their families and friends.

The children have embraced their daily routines and weekly rhythms. I've loved 'coming home' to our sweet space each morning, observing the children engrossed in their unique and meaningful works- one of which is coffee-grinding! One of my favorite observations to make is of the first work a child gravitates toward each morning. While a few of the first year students might spend more time in observation themselves, I know that they, too, are deeply engrossed in learning through the powers of their *absorbent mind*. It's encouraging to see the older children work with the younger. One example of this is older children practicing reading the labels (a language work for reading, moving, and labeling the objects in our Children's House) then allowing the younger child to move their bodies and grow more acquainted with our space as they place the labels (e.g. 'beads', 'flag', 'plant').

Outside, we are still watching our squash seedling, but we think the birds and squirrels have helped themselves to the sprouts. Inside, we've been keeping the windows open to enjoy the fresh air and so the children can enjoy watching the ongoing road work, so I've added a construction vehicle card work on the shelf to bridge the gap between the world outside and the cozy calm of the classroom.

Our MSC calendar is full, and I am grateful for the many opportunities to connect with parents and families outside of class. We are looking forward to celebrating Rosh Hashanah in class with Allison Goldstein (Isaac's mom) and focusing on forgiveness, practicing generosity, and accepting renewal.



# Magnolia

The Magnolians spent September honing their reading, language, and math skills. The first graders are making strides learning the phonics patterns of short vowels and blends along with puzzle words in their reading the language. The third graders have enjoyed a literature study of *Bunnicula* by Deborah and James Howe. As a class, we've thoroughly enjoyed reading *The Trumpet of the Swan* by E. B. White. Students are discussing literary elements while bonding with the story of Louis, the talented and graceful swan without a voice.

Our transition to the next part of our Cosmic Curriculum, *The Coming of Life*, has begun. Now that the Universe and the Earth have been made, students will begin to explore, at their own pace, the wonderfully interesting evolution of life on our planet.

We have had many geography lessons about the Earth and have delved into the composition of the Earth from the core to the mantle. We have also looked at the layers of the atmosphere. The Autumnal Equinox was celebrated with lessons on how the tilt of the Earth causes the seasons and the changes in temperature in the geographical zones of the Earth. In Biology, the first graders are learning the parts of fish and amphibians. The second graders are extending themselves to the body functions of fish and amphibians while the third graders are exploring a matrix of the body functions of all the vertebrates. We have touched on parts of plants, trees, and flowers in Botany.

The Magnolians have embarked on a few field trips this month. The third graders of both classes went to the Challenger Center where they experienced flight simulation, a planetarium documentary, and a lesson on some of NASA's most recent developments. The Lower Elementary classes both took a visit to the South Carolina State Museum. Students were able to enjoy a planetarium documentary discussing the Big Bang Theory and the creation of the Universe. They also visited various exhibits in smaller groups.

The Magnolia Room flag (pictured below) was completed, thanks to the help of our third graders. They combined the personal flags of each member to make the one. Lastly, in the canon, they opted to have a magnolia flower symbolize the unification of our community.

We look forward to sharing with you all next month!

- The Magnolia Room



# Palmetto

We have been having a busy month in the Palmetto class. Dr. Montessori believed that “going out” into the community is a good way to integrate classroom learning into our daily lives – and we agree! We are off to a good start with our travels around the local community. Our third-year students joined Magnolia thirds recently for a trip to the Challenger Learning Center to gain experience in space science. We followed this up with a whole-class trip to the South Carolina State Museum and Planetarium, where we saw the film *We Are Stars* before taking some time to explore the museum galleries.

We are working together through the steps of developing a research question, using manatees as our shared subject. Our trip to the Richland Library will give us an opportunity to check out books that will be helpful as we learn about the topics that interest us most. Planning and time management skills continue to be a focus for our class. We are introducing the children to a variety of planning tools and strategies to help them get to all the interesting works they would like to learn about during the time we have together.

We look forward to hosting our families for Watch Me Work on two evenings. The children will show their families around the classroom and demonstrate some of the lessons they have been working on. Later in the week, we will be welcoming everyone for Parent-Teacher conferences. We enjoy sharing information about your child’s progress and look forward to seeing you soon.

“We must first ensure that the right conditions are there for the child and then, when necessary, give encouragement and help. We must give the material means and the encouragement” (p. 128).

- Dr. Maria Montessori, The 1946 London Lectures



# Enrichments



## P.E. News

In Physical Education with Coach Elliot, Lower Elementary is working on hand-eye coordination with classic outdoor games. Upper Elementary is learning the rules and strategies needed when learning to play basketball.



# Enrichments continued...

## Spanish News

This year, the Spanish curriculum has grown quite a bit! We have doubled instruction for every child and improved our approach by adding more immersion and practical life experiences. Primary classrooms have opportunities for immersion and individual lessons, often utilizing the traditional Montessori materials like the bead chains and applying their Spanish skills to practice counting. This year, 5K students have their own class in the afternoons. Elementary students have twice as many practical application opportunities compared to last year, and Upper Elementary students have been writing letters to Mexican pen pals and have enjoyed their first of multiple Spanish class field trips. The students' learning has been impressive and inspiring. We look forward to the other exciting events in Spanish this month, like hosting Taqueria La Cabaña to make tacos on Dia de los Muertos, giving the Elementary students the opportunity to order lunch in Spanish with a native Spanish speaker. Please remember to send your Lower or Upper El students with \$10 cash on Thursday, October 31 to order themselves chicken, steak, or vegetarian tacos. -Señora Sarah

(Pictured right: Roxanne builds Spanish words of her choosing with her understanding of pronunciation; Señora Sarah leads Spanish circle time in P1, singing songs about our feelings, the days of the week, the weather, and typical greetings.)

## Art News

This school year, we are exploring art through the lens of geography. We began the year making our global art passports. Our travels started right here in North America for the first stamp in our art passports! Kindergarteners crafted a Gee's Bend-inspired paper quilt collage with a picture message in the center square.

Lower El created a bald eagle collage. We shared interesting facts we already know and hopefully learned a little more about these amazing birds.

Upper El explored our campus for fallen leaves to arrange in a composition and draw from life. We lucked out with a nice, cool Fall afternoon for our nature walk and noticed a few early signs of the changing season.

Classes will be looking at the art and culture of Central America in October.

Art in the Afternoon is currently working collaboratively on a cardboard "treehouse". The challenge was to create a design to solve a problem for the future. They decided on tree house design to escape flood waters. This was rather timely, just before the storm from Hurricane Helene. I am thankful for art as a means to problem solve and process when life feels overwhelming, and I hope the children are learning to use art to do the same.

