

February 1, 2007

Dear Parents,

Freezing cold has arrived keeping us all inside. The children have lots of extra energy, I'm sure you have noticed the change at home in the evening. Also, we have been hit with Influenza A and strep throat. Our one case of chicken pox turned out to be a virus, you can eliminate that category from your vigilant list. Hopefully, February and March will bring warmer weather and healthier children and teachers.

Lucio Satar, age 8 was in our schoolage program with his brothers for several years until December 2006. Lucio died yesterday from complications from Influenza. The children and teachers of MacDonald Montessori who knew him and his family are saddened and shocked by his sudden death. Please keep Lucio and his family in your thoughts and prayers.

Teachers leaving for Italy

Sarah Bailey (Wind Song) and Kari Ryg (Shell) are leaving on February 9th for a week long study at the International Center in Reggio Emilia, Italy. Anna Bartholome and Kelly Kritsberg are going to Reggio for their week long study March 26-30. Sandy Burwell and other substitute staff will be in the River room the week that Anna and Kelly are gone.

Liz (Shell), Joni (Sun) and Sandy Burwell (Education Coordinator) went to Boulder, Colorado to the Reggio- inspired preschool there for a two day study tour.

Robyn (Peace) and Perrys (Peace) will be going to the Reggio Summer Conference in June to visit three Reggio-inspired programs in Santa Monica, California.

We are excited about offering these special professional development opportunities to our teachers and look forward to all the new and enriching ideas they can bring back to all of us.

Professional Development support staff

We have hired two additional teachers to make it possible for each classroom team of teachers to meet every week with

their Education Coordinator (instead of every other week) and this will also insure that each classroom team will have an additional 2 hours of prep time each week to support the thinking and learning and creativity of your children's classrooms. While this decision is expensive we feel it is necessary to support the teachers in deepening their connection to our Reggio and Montessori philosophies and to follow the thinking and relationships of your children.

Materials Conference

Jennifer Azzariti will be returning for a Materials Exploration conference on February 17th. We will be collecting "found objects" for use in the studio. Can you help?

Remember: small:

Keys, chains. Washes, brackets, tile samples, wing nuts, hardware of all sorts, tape rolls, springs, buttons, jewelry, bobbins, puzzle pieces, curtain hooks, bells, dice, game pieces, hoop bracelets, watch bands, little tin or wood boxes, insides of clocks / watches.

Sandy will have a box in the studio for found objects to be placed in.

Valentine's Day

You will be receiving newsletters from your classrooms about Valentine's Day and all the plans.

Family Nights

Check the enclosed calendars for family nights for River, Reflection, Sun, Shell, Wind Song, Peace. You will be receiving the details from your child's teacher.

Parent/Teacher conferences

Parent/teacher conferences will be held from March 12-23. A sign up sheet will be on the door of each classroom. Please take this opportunity to get together with your child's teacher and discuss your child's experiences and relationships.

We received a wonderful, encouraging letter from the Armstrong family just after the holidays. It really buoyed our spirits and we wanted to share it with all of you. Every day we see our teachers giving their all to the children, parents and families and we know that each of you really values and appreciates our wonderful teachers. Look for new faces on the staff bulletin board by the front door, and watch for it's transformation by the River and Reflection room. We may ask for your assistance also.

Under Construction

Look for the new canopy in the Nest room to enhance a quiet, and darker space for the babies to nap. Another project taking shape is a permanent stage and curtains in the Community Room.

Education Week magazine

Andy King a photographer from Education Week spent 2 ½ hours taking pictures of the children and environment. He is bringing over a CD of all the pictures for us to share. Three of the photos will be used in the upcoming issue. We will have copies on display as soon as they are out.

Remember there are DVD's in the office of the Holiday program.

Stay well, stay happy.

Sincerely,

Beth MacDonald & the MMS Staff