



MONTESSORI CHILDREN'S GARDEN NEWSLETTER NOVEMBER 2010

Cold weather is here. We say this every year, but **please label all of your children's outerwear: boots, coats, hats and mittens.**

Also, please make sure your child has a seasonally-appropriate change of clothes in his/her bathroom cubby in the classrooms.

Dates to Remember

Thursday November 11:

This is the last day for the wreath and poinsettia sale! Thank you to Annie Gill and Amy Kruse for organizing this fundraiser.

Fri. November 12 and Wed. Nov. 24:

No school on November 12th and 24th for parent/teacher conferences. There will be childcare provided. If these days don't work for you, please don't hesitate to schedule a more convenient time with your child's teacher. For those that would like a conference with Mrs. Honey, she will schedule her class's conferences for December.

Tues. November 16:

Picture day begins at 8:30. Mr. Halverson will be happy to photograph siblings, if you don't mind the wait. He will be back in the afternoon at 1 pm for the afternoon class. You are under no obligation to purchase the pictures—this is just a service we offer.

November 18 and 19:

The Lions Club will be here again this year to do vision screening. They will be sending us more information in the coming week, so check your file folder!

November 25 and 26:

No School — Thanksgiving Break!

Announcements

St. Baldrick's Foundation

We raised \$270 for the St. Baldrick's Foundation in the month of October during our BOO campaign. Both the University of Iowa Community Credit Union and our school donated \$100. The children collected \$70 in change in their classrooms. Thank you to all who contributed. If you bank at the Credit Union, the next time you stop in there please thank them for their generosity. Edie Weaver, director of business development and a former Montessori parent, and Jean Knepper, director of public relations, visited with the directors on other ways the University of Iowa Credit Union is helping in the community.

Red Cross Visit

The Red Cross came last Tuesday and talked about winter weather with the children. She explained having a disaster kit in your home in case of loss of electricity and how to dress for winter weather.

Fence and Retaining Wall

As you probably noticed, the fence and the retaining wall have been completed on the playground. The children have been playing with bales of hay, seed pods, and pine cones in the sensory table. We will be working next on defining a small "loose" material area as well as a large "loose" material area. We are also going to cap off the sitting wall with wood. The children will still be able to walk or sit on the wall. If anyone has an abundance of interesting natural objects to share, e.g. small pine cones, pine needles, seashells, buckeyes, we would love to share them with the children in the sensory tub. We are also looking for pieces of wood long enough to define areas in the outdoor classroom.

Check the Lost and Found

Our lost and found box is filling up quickly. Please check it soon, as we will be donating any unclaimed items to Goodwill.

Nature Explore Program

Here is a little bit about the Nature Explore program that we are developing:

Nature Explore is a collaborative program of the Arbor Day Foundation and Dimensions Educational Research Foundation. The goal of this comprehensive, research-based initiative is to help children and families develop a profound engagement with the natural world, where nature is an integral, joyful part of the children's daily learning. A network of certified Nature Explore Classrooms is developing throughout the United States. They are appropriate wherever a traditional playground might be built.

Visit with Steve Murley

By Karen Woltman, Montessori parent

We are pleased to have welcomed ICCSD Superintendent Steve Murley to our school on Oct. 20th. Mr. Murley spoke about his experience of creating a public Montessori charter school in the Wausau School District (Wisconsin). In the Wausau District, declining enrollment made it possible to find space in a middle school building for an existing, private Montessori elementary school that wanted to transition into a public charter. Mr. Murley described the Montessori charter as a successful and positive venture for the Wausau District, and indicated that he has already begun considering some charter school ideas for ICCSD. Mr. Murley acknowledged that Iowa has been conservative in approaching charter schools, but expressed enthusiasm for making ICCSD a leader in Iowa charter school creation. Mr. Murley will begin by meeting with the Iowa Department of Education to determine how he might be able to move forward with his charter school ideas under current Iowa law. Thanks to all who were able to attend, and to Mrs. Honey and Mrs. Jones for hosting the event.

Classroom News

The children in Miss Becky's class will be helping to organize our Thanksgiving Celebration for the children on Nov. 23rd. It will be in the multi-purpose room. There will be authentic Native American games, as well as "make and take" activities. Miss Becky's class will assist the younger children on that day. If anyone would like to volunteer to help on that day, please let your child's teacher know.

Quotable Quotes

The children were doing an experiment on the decomposition of a pumpkin. One child remarked, "What the pumpkin is doing is decaying."

A child is running on the playground with a big grin, and says, "I'm going to be dangerous forever!"

One mother asked her child, "How do seeds travel?" The child replies, "They travel in the car and the car gets dirty."

