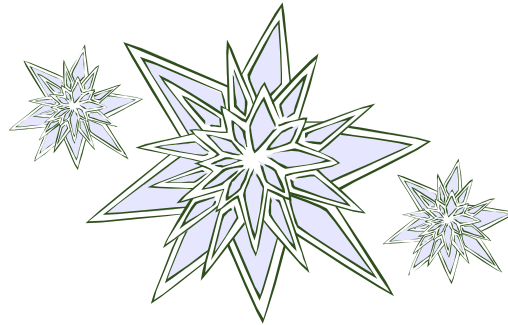


Copper Beech Montessori



Newsletter for January and February 2010

Important Dates

Thursday, January 14 Ann leaves for Heads of School retreat

Monday, January 18 closed for Columbus Day

Wednesday, January 20 Ann returns

Friday, January 29 close at 3 for staff meeting

Monday, February 15 start of winter recess

Monday, February 22 classes resume

Willow Birthdays

January 2 Nathan

February 19 Amira

Arce Birthdays

February 12 Rajan

February 12 Asa

Cypress Birthdays

January 2 Ryan

January 13 Aaron

January 13 Tommy

February 19 Mia Rose

Aspen Birthdays

January 3 Zoe

January 11 Damian

January 19 Alisa

January 20 Alessandro

February 2 Luna

February 3 Elan

Message from Ann

Thank you everyone for all the kind and thoughtful presents, I appreciate them greatly. I hope you had time to relax over the break and do some fun stuff with the kids. Both teachers and children seem rejuvenated by the vacation. Also, so far there are no sign of ailments, respiratory or gastrointestinal. I so wish we could keep it that way. I know that the domestication of animals was responsible in a big way for the development of civilization but it is my understanding that most of our germs have evolved from animal illnesses. I think it is a large price to pay.

I hear that the preschool parents enjoyed visiting the classrooms and watching their children's activities during the morning work period. I find it fascinating myself. It is like a miracle seeing their minds and spirits being formed with such sincerity and single-mindedness. You must get glimpses of that at home but, here, they are more independent and much less demanding of the adults (at least most of them are) so we get to see more. Experiencing them is the most fun part of my job and I treasure it.

I mentioned in the last newsletter that I would be away for about a week in January. In its wisdom the American Montessori Society holds a Heads Retreat each January so we can network and learn from each other. In my dedication to my profession I will trudge to the Dominican Republic and diligently attend the workshops. Then I will make sure I connect with the other Heads of School on the beach, while swimming in the pool and ocean, while visiting a sugarcane plantation, and any other activity necessary. I will be relentless and come back much inspired and, hopefully, bronzed. In my absence take any concerns to the lead teachers and, if necessary, they can call and/or email me.



The quote in the box below is really meant for teachers to read but I think parents should know what is expected of a Montessori teacher.

Remember the secret of childhood? What is the secret? That inner drive, that push that we cannot perceive, that we no longer understand because we are no longer children. In our loss of words, we seek other ways to demystify children. We track and predict and judge and chart. We put children's development into clearly defines, carefully laid-out spreadsheets for their parents to understand. But what about the details that don't fit into the boxes? We overlook the unique wonderment of each child by focusing instead on the predictors that we have chosen. We come up with out list of the individual traits that we value, and we check off when the child has shown them, and so abdicate our duty to continue to try to perceive the uncountable galaxies within each child.

If we are unable to easily give details, if it is too difficult or time-consuming to describe the unique wonderment of each child, we are not paying close enough attention. Montessori is based on the attention to each individual. Children come before our manuals. We should know, at any moment, the endless ways in which two children are different, or we are not watching carefully enough. Using a checklist for its simplicity has its merits. But don't pretend that children are simple. Leave space for the unexpected, and know that every child is unexpected."

Catherine McTamaney in
The Tao of Montessori.