



Damariscotta Montessori School

Newsletter

Miss Casey's Primary Class

Although the classroom has been full of energy and anticipation for the coming holidays and vacation, we have been able to get to a few fun holiday projects. With the first night of Hanukkah being last Friday at sunset we have been studying the Festival of lights this week. We have learned about King Antiochus and the brave Maccabees fighting for their religious freedom. We have learned about when there was only enough oil to burn the Eternal Light for one day but miraculously lasted for eight days and eight nights! In celebration of this holiday we made a traditional Hanukkah treat called Latkes. They are potato pancakes and are fried in oil which is also symbolizes the miraculous oil that endured seven days longer than it should have. The recipe that we used came from a story that we read in class called Latkes, Latkes Good to Eat is included here:

- 3 large potatoes
- ½ tsp salt
- 2 eggs
- 1/8 tsp pepper
- ¼ cup finely chopped onion
- 3 Tbl flour
- 1 Tbl finely chopped parsley
- vegetable oil

Miss Sarah's Primary Class

This week has flown by! The energy has been high and excited for weeks now, and it's hard to believe the holiday break is now upon us!

On Monday, we enjoyed our latkes for snack. I was surprised how many children were willing to try a new and very different food, and how many liked them!

Friday, we celebrated the Winter Solstice. In the morning the children and I worked together to

"To assist a child we must provide him with an environment which will enable him to develop freely."

Dr. Maria Montessori

Peel the potatoes and rinse in cold water. Grate very fine. Place grated potatoes in a colander and run cold water over them. Using your hands, squeeze out all the water.

In a large bowl, beat eggs. Add onion, parsley, salt, pepper and flour. Stir. Add grated potatoes and mix well.

Heat a small amount of oil to sizzling in a large frying pan. Drop pancake mixture by the soup spoon full into oil and flatten slightly. Cook until golden brown underneath, turn, cook on the other side till browned.

Eat while still tender but crisp. Latkes are traditionally served with applesauce and/or sour cream.

Enjoy and Happy Hanukkah!

Also this week we have made ornaments with the children's picture on them, orange/clove balls, and an old Christmastime favorite popcorn balls. I hope everyone has a safe and fun filled holiday break. See you next year.

make wassail, a warm spiced cider drink. That simmered all day long while we worked and played. In the afternoon, some of the children created sun masks, to welcome the sun back into our world, symbolically.

Here's wishing all of our families light, love and plenty of relaxation for the holidays. We'll see you after break!

Lower Elementary Class

Upper Elementary Class

This week our history studies brought us to the beginnings of the Revolutionary War. The timeline and our discussions focused on the causes of the revolution, such as the Stamp Act, Intolerable (or Coercive) Acts, the Sugar Act and the general tension in the colonies during this period of time. Of course our discussion led us to the topic of taxation without representation and how democratic models of government work. The kids have been hard at work in completing projects based on the timeline.

From Chip's Desk

Please be sure to check the lost and found. There is a lot of nice stuff in there – hats, mittens, sweatshirts, snow pants, etc. There are three lost and found baskets: one in Ms. Casey's front entrance room, one in Ms. Sarah's room by the cubbies, and one in the front hallway of the main building (to your left, by the cubbies, as you come in the front door).

As you are probably aware, we have begun our Annual Appeal. Each year we make a request for donations to the school to help us continue to provide scholarships, keep tuition to a reasonable level, maintain the building and grounds, and plan for future expansion. Our goal is simple: 100% participation. We are grateful for

Our math groups did some dynamic work this week. The older children are now working on the concept of binomials. This is always a fun exercise as the children rediscover, in a new way, the materials that they used in the Primary classroom. The younger group focused on factoring. This week we used the Montessori peg board to find the different factors of numbers and identify the Greatest Common Factor for two numbers.

gifts of all sizes, and thank everyone in advance for their help with this effort.

In January, I will be conducting a two day workshop on Positive Discipline for Parents. The workshop will focus on some theory, but mostly it is a time to examine practical and time tested tools to help parents help their children to develop inner discipline, cooperation and a healthy sense of self. The workshop will be held on Friday, January 5th and Saturday, January 6th from 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Lunch will be served. The cost of the workshop will be \$50 for DMS families (normally a \$250 per participant workshop). Attendees will receive two Positive Discipline books.

Positive Discipline Corner

Suggestions and Planning Ahead to avoid the use of punishments and rewards.

Instead of praise, use encouraging statements, descriptive language and/or help your child to reflect on an accomplishment themselves. Some examples of encouraging feedback vs. praise are:

I noticed that you cleaned your room without being told.

Congratulations!

Wow, you really worked hard on that. How do you feel?

After a child brings you something for your feedback (in this case artwork): *Thank you for sharing this with*

me. Hey, it looks like you used a lot of blue in this one. That reminds me of the sea.

I noticed that you spend a lot of time on that.

Thank you for your cooperation.

What do you think of your accomplishment?

How does it make you feel to _____?

Instead of punishments, try a few simple ideas:

Involve the Child in Solutions: In the event of a continuing problem involve the child in ideas on how to rectify it. For example, if your child is supposed to make his/her bed every morning and it's not getting done, ask (at a time when the problem has not just happened), "It is really important to our family that you help by making your bed each morning. I noticed that it hasn't been happening lately. How can we

make sure that your bed gets made every morning?" Listen.

Decide What You'll Do – Then Do It (kindly and firmly): Use actions and not words (decide what you will do and then do it). For example, if your child is has been stalling to get dressed in the morning and it is causing you to be late, you may decide to simply pick him/her up, and bring them to the car in their pajamas along with their clothes (letting them get dressed at school). After buckling them in the car seat, a simple comment like, "Please make sure that you're dressed as soon before we leave," should suffice.

Let Routines Be the Boss: Building routines is probably one of the most effective ways to avoid power struggles and encourage cooperation. So much so that there will be an entire article devoted to it. Routines give children the power to predict what is going to happen and work within those limits. When routines are not in place, someone has to call all the shots. That person is usually the adult (sometimes in a more passive environment it is the child). Routines allow the adult to hold pre-established limits rather than arbitrary ones, thus giving everyone the same level of communication on what's going to happen and reducing anxiety. Ideas for building routines

should include factoring in logical consequences (i.e. teeth brushed, bed made, and fully dressed before breakfast), therefore giving the adult the ability to hold children accountable for their piece in a matter of fact way ("I'm sorry, but you'll have to take an apple in the car, you don't have time for breakfast now."). Follow Through: Sometimes following through with a logical consequence or a decision on what you would do (both above) is very difficult because it is incredibly hard to see children upset or uncomfortable (or even hungry). However, it is vital to step back and remember the bigger picture. The point is to help our children experience these consequences in order to develop inner discipline by making choices for themselves. A great example of this happens early on when children are potty-training. Potty training can take forever if the parent is not willing to allow their child to experience the discomfort of soiling their cloth underwear. Diaper companies have made millions on us parents who don't want our children to be upset or uncomfortable. As a result of disposable "underwear" (diapers that don't have tabs but are pulled on like underwear) children are potty training later and later, and thus have decreased independence and freedom.

Thank You

- Kim Inman for your help with the sign board.
- Bill Hinkley and Teresa Hewson for reading with the children in the elementary classroom.
- Carolina Rushton for teaching Spanish.
- Doug Rushton for publishing the newsletter.
- Katie LeBel for publishing the recent press releases.
- Lee Parsons for installing the "Enter" and "Exit" signs. Nice work, Lee!

Announcements and Dates to Remember

- Monday, December 25 – Monday, January 1 – Holiday Break (No School)
- Tuesday, January 2 – Parent's Association Meeting at 6:00 p.m. (Pizza at 5:30 p.m.)
- Friday, January 5 and Saturday, January 6 – Positive Discipline Workshop from 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Cost is \$50 per family.
- Monday, January 15 – Martin Luther King's Birthday (No School)
- Tuesday, January 16 – Classroom and Community Meeting

Celebrate Community on New Years Day

Monday, January 1, 2007

Noon to 3 p.m. at Skidompha Library, Damariscotta

You are invited to a community open house on New Years Day at Skidompha Library on Maine St. Damariscotta with Music, Song, Poetry Readings, Puppetry, Watershed mudmobile, Crafts for Children, Contemplation, & Conversation

There will be a Folk Music Session at 1:00----Bring a tune, song, or story to share or just listen.

Snack Potluck, savory and desert finger foods to share are appreciated if you can. This event is free and lots of fun for the whole family. We hope to see you there!!!!

Call Jenny Begin at 563-3781 if you would like to help out on the day of the event. (Sponsored by CONA, Citizens Offering New Alternatives, a local group of concerned people, sponsoring movies and educational programs that explore important issues of our time.)

