



# *Damariscotta Montessori School*

## *Newsletter*

### **Miss Casey's Primary Class**

### **Miss Sarah's Primary Class**

During this short week, we have begun our winter studies cultural unit, as, it seems, winter has finally begun. So far we have begun learning about snowflakes, and the different types of snowflakes. A popular material in this area has been the snowflake image matching work. Snowflake hole-punching and multicolored snowflake stamps have been wonderful tools in the art area of the classroom. During rest and story time, Miss Amy has been sharing winter and snow themed books, such as "Snowflake

### **Lower Elementary Class**

Winter returned with a vengeance this week, and finally enough snow to run around in.

Parents often ask us what they can do for their children at home, and these are some ways to help in math, especially on car rides or times when you are waiting with your child: skip counting by 5, 2, 3, 6, 7, etc., practicing times tables through 12, and simple addition, subtraction and money problems. In reading, the most important thing you can do as parents is to read to your child, and have your child read to you. When your child reads to you, give them just enough help so that they can maintain the meaning of what they are reading and do not become frustrated. We are currently reading aloud a Judy Blume book about Fudge and his big brother Peter, and the new baby sister in their household, known as Tootsie!

In Science this week we learned about the platyhelminth planaria, the third simplest phylum

### **Upper Elementary Class**

This week in the Upper Elementary we spend a lot of time completing projects that are currently under way. The children finished putting together their rain collectors – there were some interesting

"I don't need to teach anything to children: it is they who, placed in a favorable environment, teach me."

Dr. Maria Montessori

Bentley", a biographical picture book about the first man to photograph snowflakes. This book features beautiful woodcut illustrations, and tells of Bentley's work and life in a simple, understandable way. Also popular has been our listening station, which features on book and tape, "The Snowy Day" by Ezra Jack Keats.

Look for more on winter to come!

of invertebrates. In Geometry we continued to work on triangles, and in Grammar the 2nd. and 3rd. years worked with the grammar boxes, which is a work with which they practice identifying the functions of words; adverbs, articles, etc.

On Friday Ms. Proffetti introduced the elementary students to Egyptian art. She had prepared plaster plaques for the children to create Egyptian style wall paintings. We talked about the different way the Egyptians used perspective, often having the profile of the face, and feet with the front view of the body, and how the details of their everyday life has been found on the walls, and in the sculpture and household items they left in their tombs.

Next week we begin the studies of the Time Lines of Man, and of Life. In Botany we will explore the stems of plants, and the specialized stem of trees, the tree trunk.

designs! As well, we also finished off our revolutionary war unit, which took a little longer than expected to finish, as the kids completed their own timelines. We continued on with our

studies in geometry as the oldest group measured the volume of the "Brown Stair" from Ms. Sarah's class, and the younger group worked on more equivalence proofs, preparing them for the study of surface area. Our research papers are now becoming a focus for the children, as we discussed the concept and skills of note taking and developing the structure of a research report. The math groups worked on trinomial equations and divisibility respectively.

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### ***From Chip's Desk***

Don't forget to mark your calendars for the Parent Education workshop this month. We will be discussing a very special Montessori material, called the Constructive Triangles. This is a terrific example of a material that is used all the way from the primary to the upper elementary classrooms, moving from the very concrete to the abstract. We've done this presentation before and it is always a popular one.

Also, next month, on Tuesday, February 6th we will be holding our annual Montessori for Kindergarten and Montessori for Elementary night. Montessori for Kindergarten starts at 5:30 p.m. and is an information and discussion meeting for parents whose children are approaching Kindergarten age. We will talk about the importance of Montessori for the Kindergarten year and what to expect from the Kindergarten year in Montessori. This is a valuable meeting whether you are planning on having your child stay for the Montessori elementary program or transition into public elementary school. On hand will be our Primary staff, other parents of children who are approaching their Kindergarten year, and parents of elementary aged children who have had their children complete the Montessori Primary program (both parents of children in public school and in Montessori).

The Montessori for Elementary meeting will take place at 7:00 p.m. that evening, and like the Montessori for Kindergarten, we will address the

Next week we will start to hunker down and take some notes on the research topics that the kids have chosen. Once we complete Johnny Tremain, we will take a short break from the novels so that we can have more time to focus on the research work. Rain collectors will be placed and ready to collect whatever precipitation Mother Nature throws our way. We will also begin to focus on post Revolutionary history next week.

benefits and elements of our elementary program. On hand will be the staff of the Elementary program as well as parents of children in the program. We hope to see you there!

Valentines Day is quickly approaching. Just a quick note regarding our policy on Valentine's cards/gifts. Please feel free to have your child bring in cards or gifts for everyone in the class. While we don't have a celebration in the classroom we do collect all the cards and gifts and put them in children's bags to bring home. With this in mind, please do not address cards to specific children (i.e. "To John"). Rather, simply address cards with a general greeting like "My friend", "My Valentine", or just "Happy Valentine's Day", and specify who the card is from. This will save your child's teacher hours! Thank you in advance for your help and cooperation.

We are now at around 60% participation for the annual fund. Thank you to everyone who has contributed thus far. Again, our goal is simple: 100% participation. The funds raised help us continue to provide scholarships, keep tuition to a reasonable level, maintain the building and grounds, and plan for future expansion. We are grateful for gifts of any size, and thank everyone in advance for their help with this effort.

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### ***Positive Discipline Corner*** ***Alternatives to Nagging***

Try gesturing to make your point rather than talking. For instance, if there are some clothes

on the floor that should be in the hamper just tap your child on the shoulder and point to the clothes with a knowing and warm expression. Also, if your child has something in their possession that they shouldn't, just quietly walk

towards them and put out your hand. The key to this technique is to say nothing. A kind but firm way to help remind and redirect children with respect and without nagging!

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### ***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.
- Sarah, Jill and Casey for your help with the Community and Classroom meetings.

### ***Announcements and Dates to Remember***

- Tuesday, January 23 – Parent Education Workshop at 6:00 p.m. – Childcare is provided.
  - Thursday, January 25 – Upper Elementary Field Trip to see “Freedom Train” at the Merrill Auditorium.
  - February, 1 – Elementary Re-enrollment begins.
  - Tuesday, February 6 – Montessori for Kindergarten @ 5:30 p.m., Montessori for Elementary @ 7:00 p.m.
  - February 19 – 23 – Winter Vacation (No School)
  - Tuesday, February 27 – Open Board Meeting @ 6:30 p.m.
  - Wednesday, February 28 – Re-enrollment for Elementary classroom ends, and open enrollment for Elementary begins.
  - Thursday, March 1 – Re-enrollment and enrollment for siblings for the Primary program begins.
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