



# Children's House Montessori School

DeLand, Florida

## Newsletter February 2020

### *A Message from the Head of School*

Dear Children's House Community,

February has ushered in the warmer temperatures, and the children have all started sprouting up like the plants around us! Every child seems to have grown so much over the last month. We are busy in work and in play.

By now, you should have received the materials to enroll your child for the upcoming 2020/21 school year. Please be sure those are returned before March 10. We have applications on file for new families who would like to enroll, and I want to be sure you all have space before offering it to others. If you have any questions about registration, please stop by and see me, or you can contact me by phone or email.

Another big thank you to Solly Williams for the playground face lift! The new color really brings it to life and makes it look new. The children were all so excited to see it when they returned after the President's Day weekend.

The Dash for the Future is coming up soon! All pledge forms are due by Monday, March 2. If you would please be sure to bring your pledge sheet and all donations in, we will get everything counted and then announce what was raised at the Dash on March 12. On that day, we will be dismissing all students at 11:30. There is no after school care that day. Please be sure your child is dressed in clothing that is easy to run in, including their Dash for the Future T-Shirt, and sneakers. We will have water during the run, and bananas available as well. The course will have a few optional obstacles to make it even more fun, and we'll be playing music to keep everyone motivated. If you'd like to volunteer, there is a sign up sheet on the office door. You are welcome to come and cheer on the runners, or run/walk around the track with your child. We'd love to have a big cheering section this year!

I emailed the community about an anonymous donor who gave money to pay off some past due balances. It was their way of spreading love on Valentine's Day! In the end, they helped fifteen of our families. I have heard from many of those families and they have asked me to pass along their thanks. So, to the person who donated the money, thank you very much! Your kindness and generosity was appreciated.

Take good care,  
Ms. Kelly



#### Parents Day Out!

Our Parent's Night Out was so successful, we decided to try an afternoon out.

March 18  
11:00-3:00

Look for more information and a sign up soon!

## Primary with Ms. Amy and Ms. Morgan

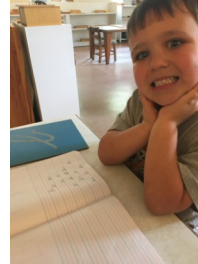


According to Maria Montessori, part of the method of the education of the primary aged children is care for their environment and care for themselves. It is lovely to see the students do this. They really enjoy helping with 'jobs' and they have become proficient in this area.

This month we are ending our cultural studies of Europe and beginning new explorations of our world in the upcoming month.



The layers of language are unfolding in our classroom. Children are being introduced to new lessons, writing in journals daily, and the kindergarteners are learning about the function of words.



## Lower Elementary with Ms. Princess and Ms. Nikki

Hello parents! Here are some of the things we have been doing at school. This month, we have been writing plays and reports about Antarctica. Then we presented them to the class. There have been elections for Class President and Vice President. The Class President is Paxton Ball and the Vice President is James Sibbald. Congratulations to both of you! We will have an election for Graphic Designer soon. We have also been studying fossils, flowers and mold. Thank you to Elizabeth Henslee for bringing in the fossil boxes! Some of the students have been making a timeline of the United States Presidents and drawing them. One the playground, some of us have been playing a sport called hand ball. We play it almost every day. We had an awesome Valentines Day!

In honor of Black History Month, we read a lot of books and discussed events of the past and the present, and possibilities for the future. We are also making a Freedom Quilt.

We would like to thank Ms. Loretta for visiting, Vivien Kyle for helping on Wednesdays, and one of the Middle School students, Isak, for bringing in his snake, Mickey.

For a short month we were very busy!

~This month's article was written by Ainsley, Allie and Samvid

## After School Program

As a reminder, the after school program is for students who need care after 3:05 up until 5:30. Recently, there have been a number of families spending time on the playground after school. We welcome people to stay and let their children play. If you would like to do this, please keep in mind that your child is within your care at that time. It is very important that they still follow the school rules while here, even in your care. The after care teachers will not be monitoring children whose parents are on the playground. Please be sure your child is in your sight and that you are ensuring that they are playing safely with others. And, please let the teachers handle any situations that may arise with other students.



### Friends of Children's House

Our next meeting is March 5 at 4:30. The organization will be making the last of the preparations for the DASH for the Future and checking in on future events. See you then!

*"Children are like wet cement. Whatever falls on them makes an impression"*  
~Dr. Hiam Ginnot

# What's Growing in the Garden?

The weather has been swinging wildly lately, plunging down into the low forties and soaring into the 80's all in a 24 hour period! Despite this, the garden has remained a busy, busy place. Early spring cleaning has begun as we rake up the leaves and pull out the weeds and we fill up our new composters. We've planted new tomatoes, received new potting tables (built by Ms. Sharon's husband Jim) and continued with activities that introduce concepts from biology and taxonomy. We've begun planning for our spring plant sale! It is scheduled for April 21-23, mark your calendars!



We also received a \$100 sponsorship from Lowe's. A big thank you to Katy Clary for helping us obtain this wonderful gift for our garden! We purchased a hose, loppers, weeding tools, and weeding buckets, a blackberry bush and flowers. (pictured right)

The cool weather has meant a lot of delicious treats in the garden. We have harvested peas, greens, peppers, and dill for Friday salad. The loquats have ripened and been enjoyed by everyone passing through the garden. If you haven't had one, stop on by! We've also eaten the occasional borage flower (tastes like cucumber) and radish seed pods (milder than the roots).

And the flowers! Between the impatiens (from our Lowe's sponsorship) and the flowers we started from seeds and cuttings back at the beginning of the school year, our winter garden is full of color! Pansies, mums, borage, calendula, marigold, African blue basil, various salvias, coreopsis are all brightening even the coldest mornings. We've also got a lot native gaillardia and black-eyed Susan's not yet in bloom springing up all over the butterfly garden. As we approach spring even more color should appear, a feast for the eyes as well as our pollinators.



And thank you to Piper and her family for contributing a beautiful rosemary bush for her birthday. We had tons of fun planting it and it smells and looks wonderful! (pictured left)



Pictured right: Students tending the strawberry patch



## Lower Elementary with Ms. Nettie and Ms. Kalie

This month our class has been studying about the contributions of various African Americans throughout history. We learned about the influential work of various artists of the Harlem Renaissance such as Selma Burke and Louis Armstrong. We also read about many inventors, scientists, and activists. We were sad to hear about the passing of NASA mathematician Katherine Johnson this month, but we were inspired to learn about her life and important work. In addition, we worked on various math strategies such as decomposing to add, rounding, counting on, and making 10. We also dissected flowers and look forward to more gardening opportunities in March! Thank you to Isak for bringing in his python, Mickey. We learned so many things!



*“Don't let what you cannot do interfere with what you can do.”  
~ John R. Wooden*

# Montessori Materials

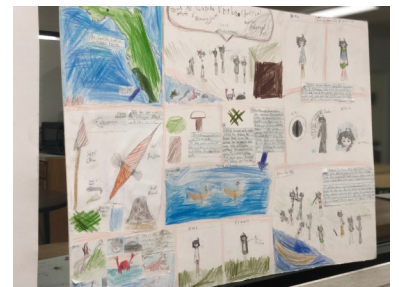
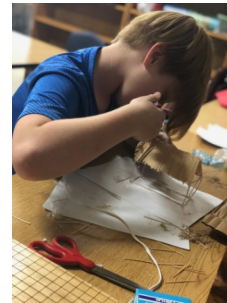
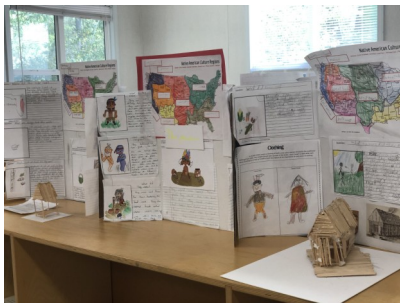
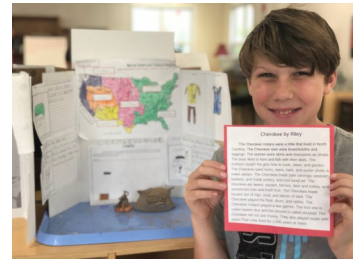
The Pink Tower, The Golden Beads, The Racks and Tubes. When you hear about these things at home, do you wonder what they are and how they relate to your child's education? I sometimes hear parents saying they don't have a clear vision of how their children are learning. Each material has a purpose, and each one is important. Let's begin with the Pink Tower. It's a lesson done with the younger children, and is a foundational material from the sensorial area of the classroom. The task a child faces it to complete the tower from biggest cube to smallest. Stacking the cubes calls for visual discrimination, coordination, and precision. Indirectly, the child is preparing him/herself for understanding cubed roots in later math. It also introduces the concept of base ten, with the smallest cube being 1 cm cubed and the largest being 10 cm cubed.



In the newsletters to come, you'll find information about more of the materials that are used on a regular basis in the classrooms!

## Upper Elementary with Ms. Esther and Mr. Keegan

This month, Upper Elementary students have been studying peoples and civilizations from the past. They have created models of tribal homes, handmade hunting tools, and canoes. Some students have created beautiful artwork to represent clothing, religious beliefs, and daily life. The older students took a trip to our local library to check out books about the ancient river valley civilizations. The students are all working hard to create beautiful presentations to share with each other. One of our students, Riley, is especially proud of his work on the Cherokee tribe of North America. (pictured right)



My Ball Python Rudy  
by Jensen

I brought Rudy in to tell my class about ball pythons. Rudy is a ball python. I got him at a reptile expo. I got him as a baby. I have him in a 60 gallon tank. He is a very nice snake. I have had him for 3 years. I go to a reptile expo every year. Ball pythons are from the southern part of Africa. They can eat rats, mice, and even rabbits but it is not usual for them to eat rabbits. They will eat just about anything they can fit in their mouth. They can get up to 4 feet long.





One of the Middle School students brought his python, Mickey, to show to the students and share information about how to care for them. Some of the staff were so intrigued and decided to hold him!

## *Do You Need Help with Tuition?*

Did you know there are scholarships available? The state of Florida has a variety of scholarships that can help pay tuition at private schools.

1. [Florida Tax Credit](#)—An income based scholarship
2. [Family Empowerment Scholarship](#)—An income based scholarship (with a higher income cap)
3. [The Gardiner Scholarship](#)—For students with certain special needs
4. [The McKay Scholarship](#)—For children with special needs
5. [The Hope Scholarship](#)—For children who have been bullied in school (this needs to come from a public school)

If you click on the scholarship names, you'll be directed to the website to learn more about each scholarship, and find out how to apply.

We are also in the process of getting the ELC funding for preschool age children as well as the VPK funding for four year old children. Once that is complete, I'll email all the families it could help.

## *Primary with Ms. Caitlyn and Ms. Cory*

During this month we celebrated Lunar (Chinese) New Year and talked about all of the lovely traditions associated with this national celebration. We wished for prosperity and good luck as well as we all came together to bring in the New Year again, in a different way. Learning about new cultures and celebrations around the world really helps us learn to be inclusive and celebrate diversity. Alongside of that, we also celebrated Valentine's Day and talked about what we would like to signify for learning about that holiday in our classroom - which is, Peace Education. We had some new materials added to our environment which help with learning about Peace, such as Peacekeeper classification cards, a beautiful sewn labyrinth and some amazing Peace Education books. We are really diving into grace and courtesy this month with our Peace focus, to remember to always be kind. One of our favorite books in the classroom is "Our Peaceful Classroom" by Aline D. Wolf. This is a beautiful story about a Montessori Classroom from a student's perspective. If you haven't read it, I highly recommend it. It has absolutely beautiful illustrations by Montessori children as well. While we've had fun this month - We are excited to welcome Spring soon and can't wait for the warm weather to stay for good.



Above: Celebrating Chinese New Year  
Below: Thanks to everyone who came to the Open House Lessons!



## *From the Reading Nook*

The following are some games/activities to encourage reading at home: Toddler/Primary – Make a letter match game by cutting out letters from magazines and/or newspapers. Match together the upper- and lower-case letters and practice saying their names and sounds. Primary/Lower Elementary – Cut out or draw small pictures of familiar objects and match to the beginning consonant letter. Write the letters on a larger piece of paper and say each picture and the letter it begins with. Lower/Upper Elementary – Make a game of concentration with sight words and/or sound out words written on cards. Use Dolch or Fry sight word lists and CVC words for sounding out. Upper Elementary/Middle School – Make a monopoly style game with word family patterns. Write words with similar patterns (night, light, tight) on cards. Line cards in a board style face up. Add additional spaces such as Go Back one space! or Your turn again! Play the game with dice and when you land on a word you record that word on a recording sheet with the pattern. Check out this website for more details: <https://www.readingrockets.org/article/six-games-reading> and there is a printed version in the office. Enjoy playing and having fun with reading! Every child is a reading child!

These titles can be found/reserved through the online and in person Volusia County library catalog.

Toddler:

1. *A Book of Love* by Emma Randall
2. *All kinds of Families* by Suzanne Lang

Primary:

1. *I will always be your bunny: love from the Velveteen Rabbit* by Frances Gilbert
2. *Siempre, Siempre te quere/I've loved you since forever* by Hoda Kotb

Lower Elementary:

1. *Otter: I Love Books!* by Sam Garton
2. *My Papi Has a Motorcycle* by Isabel Quintero

Upper Elementary:

1. *Louisa May Alcott's Little Women* by Mandy Archer
2. *Narwhal's Otter Friend* by Ben Clanton

Middle School:

1. *I, Cosmo* by Carlie Sorosiak
2. *My Life as an Ice Cream Sandwich* by Ibi Aanu Zobi

*"I have a passion for teaching kids to become readers, to become comfortable with a book, not daunted. Books shouldn't be daunting, they should be funny, exciting, and wonderful; and learning to be a reader gives a terrific advantage."*  
~Roald Dahl

## *Middle School with Ms. Patsy*

The Middle School students have begun a new type of learning in their classroom. After the teacher change, we enrolled the students in the Florida Virtual School (FLVS) for three of their courses, Math, Social Studies, and English. This was new territory for us as well as the students. It took a little time to get them all enrolled, and for them to get used to this type of learning, but they have really settled into it and are doing quite well. Ms. Patsy is there to guide them when they need it, and they still work together as a group for some of the lessons.

With Ms. Diane, the students are studying oceanography in earth science. They have completed experiments in salinity and are currently doing individual research papers on one of our 5 oceans. We will be studying currents, marine life, and the current state of our oceans in the coming weeks. In art, the students are constructing their own personal sketchbook/journal.

In Life Skills, Ms. Karen has worked with them in different areas. We are so thankful to the two parent volunteers that came and worked with the class. They completed their CPR and First Aid training with Michele Scott of Cardi-Act CPR Training and they had a unit on health and personal hygiene with Dr. Michelle Williams of Central Florida Pediatrics. They are now working on personal finance, including how to write checks and balance their checkbooks.

They have also been busy discussing their graduation trip! They have a lot of ideas, and we're looking at which will be the best option.

Thanks to everyone who helped with, and purchased items from, our Valentine's Day sale!