

FEBRUARY  
SCHOOL  
CALENDAR

Board of Directors Meeting 5:30 PM	13
Box Tops for Education Labels Due	16
Parent/Teacher Conferences 12:00 - 8:00 PM Student Holiday	17
Alexandria Children's Mardi Gras Parade	18
Mardi Gras Student Holiday	20 - 21
Louisiana Montessori Annual Meeting 10:00 AM	25
<b>SCIENCE NIGHT</b>  <b>6:00 PM</b>	28

## Repetition

Edward Fidellow

Repetition is at the heart of a child's learning. In Montessori, repetition is built into the structure of the child's experience. (Adults are bored with repetition – children exult in it.)

At home you experience variations of a child's need and desire for repetition. Why? Why? Why? Read me the same book again. Tell me the same story – again! Repetition feeds an emotional need of the child, not an intellectual need (though repetition aids the intellect). Knowledge is not the aim of repetition. Repetition is an emotional cocoon for the child. This is also why many adults do not move forward in life because repetition or sameness provides a safe harbor.

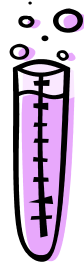
Eventually what repetition accomplishes for the child is a solid base of experience and an emotional equilibrium. Repetition produces a big sigh of satisfaction. Not just a sigh of satisfaction over completion but a sigh of satisfaction over having some real and deep feeling of control over a corner of their life.

As adults, we often long for the world to stop long enough for us to get caught up. That is what repetition does for the child – it gives them time to learn, to assimilate, to enjoy, to savor. Also, repetition is often a revisit to an earlier triumph, an earlier accomplishment. Each revisit is a celebration of that success. Repetition will continue until every bit of satisfaction is enjoyed from the process.

Even as repetition is an emotional experience, it also becomes a physical experience of success. The physical repetition replays the satisfaction of mastery. It is very much like learning to play tennis: when you finally gain enough physical control for the ball to go in the direction you intend, the game increases in enjoyment. The physical and emotional control then serves as the base framework to add intellectual accomplishment and attainment to the child's world.

Montessori education is unique because it is the only educational philosophy that starts with and builds on the child's senses instead of the child's intellect. The intellectual achievement of reading and writing start with great components of physicality – eye movements, hand movements, coordination, sound, and diction. These physical and mental movements demand great cooperation between them. Just as the gymnast practices again and again to achieve perfection, it is this cooperation between the body and the mind to will action, achievement, perfection, and academic success.

Repetition is the child's key to prepare physically and emotionally for the future challenges of the intellect.



# Science Night

## February 28, 2012 at 6:00 PM

### -Presented by Mary Caraveo and the 5-12 Students-

### Please join us!



## News From the Toddler Classrooms

### Beall/Burnaman/ Havniar/Lortie

Wow, what a big month for the Toddler Program! It has been one year since the first group of toddler students walked through the doors of MEC. What fun we have had building a program where the children can explore at will and practice life skills that increase their independence - all while developing their mind and body. We celebrated the 1st Birthday of the MEC Toddler Program with a large birthday party complete with cake, balloons, and treat bags. Special thanks to Noelle Crowell for her time and effort to make the party a success. We hope this can be an annual event for families to attend. Thank you to all the families who were able to attend the celebration.

A significant change for the better occurred this January when the tod-

dler teachers decided to integrate the Montessori approach to toileting in the classroom. We are happy to report that the program is now diaper-free! After just 4 short weeks of intense toilet training, we have had a tremendously high success rate. All the research that told us that the sensitive period for toileting is between the ages of 16-22 months has been verified. Remember that it is very common for a child to progress and regress frequently while toilet training. Please know that your child's teacher can help any family in the program who feels overwhelmed with the thought of toilet training. Please call us if you need advice. On a side note, if your child comes home in white training pants from school, please return them to the class. Our supply is slowly depleting. Our sincerest gratitude for the volunteer parents who washed the soiled clothing

we has this month. You are much appreciated!

This next month we will be focusing on pink, red, and hearts in honor of Valentine's Day. The classrooms will also have more water works available. Here are a few water activities you can do at home: using an ice cube tray and a medicine dropper, have your child transfer water from one section to another. Add a drop of food coloring to make it even better. Give your child a small piece of a sponge and have them wash the leaves on your indoor plants. Show them how to gently wipe each leaf by moving in one direction - yes, they can be gentle! Give them a few items to place in a bowl to experiment what objects sink and what objects float.

We look forward to seeing the parents this month for parent/teacher conferences. Happy Valentine's Day!

# News From the Classrooms

## Voorhies/Willis/Clabo

The month of January was very busy for our class! We worked on our geography research and chose our countries for the next geography project. We will be working on travel videos for our chosen countries; Mrs. Willis will be guiding the children through that as well as through the yearbook. We had a wonderful time at our book discussion and appreciate all of the parents who came. We also enjoyed speaking to current and prospective families on Parent Education Night.

The 4-H club is doing well this year. Mrs. Rozas spoke to us about her trip to Jamaica, so we thank her for coming to do that. Gabe entered the Winter Food Festival and his cheesecake dip won a purple ribbon!

Money for the Penny King and Queen Contest is due the day of our March meeting, Monday, March 19, and the 4-H Books are due April 10.

On February 2, our class attended a performance of Schoolhouse Rock, and it was a lot of fun. We hope to see our parents for the Geography Feast that we have scheduled for Thursday, February 16.

## Clair/Sharkey

After the excitement of the holidays, January was a calm and settled month. The children have been working hard at all sorts of jobs. At any given moment, work is out from all areas of the room. In practical life, all the water jobs - pouring, sponge exchange, and the baster—have all been very popular. On the science shelf, the sea shells have been a popular activity.

Our room has been very festive lately. We made and hung Chinese lanterns as part of our study of Chinese New Year. The children enjoyed learning to say “gung hay fat choy”

Thank you to everyone who came out on two different nights during Parent Education Week. It was gratifying to see so much interest in the school from current and prospective families. If you have more

questions, please feel free to make an appointment to come observe the class during the school day.

## Amos/Snipes

The children returned from their winter break ready to work, and they have been keeping their teachers busy!

Thanks to Mr. Kevin Chapman, who went on a fishing “expedition” to find a fish for our classroom. The children have already begun to make mini Mardi Gras floats in preparation for February. Look for them displayed above their cubbies.

We enjoyed meeting our parents on the parent education nights. If you could not attend the talk, you can access it online at [www.vimeo.com/3845446](http://www.vimeo.com/3845446). It is well worth hearing.

We are looking forward to a great month of February.

## Hayes/Rodgers

January was a time of new beginnings in the Hayes/ Rodgers class. We began the new year with goals for each child posted in the class where each child could review them. The sevens and eights began 2012 with a field trip to the Alexandria Museum of Art to coincide with our needs of man studies in history and art. Along with our class volunteers Mr. Evans, Ms. Barnes, and Mr. Carlo, the children viewed several interesting exhibits. The sixes, thanks to Mrs. Bernard, were able to attend the Baton Rouge Kennel club’s dog show at the Rapides Parish Coliseum. We learned about the many varieties of canines and were even able to meet and pet several famous dogs.

In addition to doing their reading, writing and arithmetic, our eights boys learned about making coleslaw from the cabbages grown in the class garden. Cody and Spencer will agree it was a “grate” experience. Most of the children tried the cream of broccoli soup made from our garden and we all lived to tell about it. We are still harvesting from our fall garden and are already starting seeds in the potting shed for the spring garden. The class is doing a tre-

mendous job recycling and composting, and we are observing many varieties of birds visiting our bird feeder this winter.

## Carlin/Reed

We came back to school ready to work. Solids, liquids, and gases were our topics for the first part of January. We froze water, melted ice, and boiled water to illustrate the forms of matter. Eating apple juice popsicles was a favorite.

One morning we made fish prints. Each child made one for home and one for a class quilt. Mrs. Reed and I embroidered their names on the quilt.

All of our readers need lots of practice. When the children bring their books home, please have them read to everyone in the family. Anyone who would like to listen to readers, please come.

Two more 5’s have finished writing to 1,000. All are in their second handwriting book and making good use of erasers.

Thanks to all parents we saw at our two Parent Education Nights. We really enjoyed talking to old and new parents and sharing what we do here at Montessori.

## Gaiennie/Caraveo

The mild weather is very unusual for February. But, as usual, at this time of year everyone is super busy with math. Our 8’s are dividing, the 7’s are busy multiplying, and the 6’s are adding up every number they can find. Mrs. Gaiennie is busy trying to keep up with all the lessons!

It seems like February will be a short month with a long list of activities. The children always enjoy making special gifts for their Valentine. They will have an early start for Mardi Gras as we look forward to meeting with parents at conferences on the 17th. And, of course, we all look forward to the Children’s Mardi Gras Parade. Finally, Mrs. Caraveo will be busy with our class, while also coordinating the projects for Science Night on February 28. We look forward to seeing everyone there!

Lastly, we would appreciate any snack donations to help stock our cabinet. These kids like to eat!

## Looking for Answers to Your Parenting Dilemmas?

*Love and Logic* may have the answers you are trying to locate.

Visit <http://www.loveandlogic.com/articles.html>

There you will find video clips, podcasts, and articles covering a range of topics from character, homework, and potty training to manners, spanking, and school success. In addition to the free resources, many books and dvds are available for purchase.

## Check it Out!

If you were unable to join us on parent education night, it is worth your time to view a video presentation by renowned pediatric neuropsychologist, Dr. Steve Hughes, entitled "Good at Doing Things." In this highly visual, rapid-paced, and entertaining talk, Dr. Hughes describes how Maria Montessori's brain-based approach to education provides an unparalleled foundation for the development of academic, social, and executive functions critical for advanced problem-solving and lifetime success. He shows how Montessori education parallels what we now know about brain development and fosters the development of advanced cognitive functions, social cognition, and such higher-order competencies as empathy and leadership.

The video may be viewed at:  
[www.vimeo.com/3845446](http://www.vimeo.com/3845446).

## MPA NEWS

It is time once again to turn in our Box Tops for Education. Please send any Box Tops that you have to the school no later than Thursday, February 16.

The last day to order a brick for the Cut in Stone campaign is April 14, 2012. If you have not yet ordered a brick you may obtain an order form from our website at :

[www.cenlamontessori.org](http://www.cenlamontessori.org) . You will find the form by clicking on the parents link and looking under the heading "forms."

**A big thank you to Chris Fung** for designing our new school T-shirt. Everyone is very pleased with the new design. The T-shirts will be in soon!

## Registration Update

As of February 1, we have limited openings in the 3-6 and 6-9 classes for the 2012-2013 school year. We are accepting waiting list applications for the toddler classes and the 9-12 class which are currently full.

If you know of a family who would like to enroll their children for the upcoming school year, now is the time to obtain an application form from the school office.

We will continue to accept registrations until all vacancies are filled. We accept waiting list applications year-round, and contact families on the waiting list as spaces become available.