



Center Montessori School

PRIMARY PRESS

February 16, 2018

Giving Back

From the first day of school at the Center until the last, we offer ways for children to access knowledge through what we call "the prepared environment." Within this classroom setting are a myriad of materials and experiences waiting to be planted as seeds of knowledge. This theory of the scattering of the seeds of knowledge was one of Maria Montessori's greatest educational plans. For she discovered that the little bits of information the children gain about their environment as small children does deepen and grow into full knowledge as the children age and access more information of interest. Without these early seeds, the children take longer to gain knowledge.

Dr. Montessori thought the way to help motivate the child to want to gain new experiences and more information was to present beautiful lessons in an enticing manner. These lessons were to be so lovely to observe and so inviting to the child as to engage her in the activities and hence in the action of learning. All this would happen without the child realizing it, so strong would be the child's attraction to the lesson.

Here at our school we support the findings of Maria Montessori as we observe children each day finding Montessori materials inviting and exciting. We see many of our children progressing academically in ways not normally seen as they learn mathematics operations and how to read before entering first grade. We see children interested in the parts of animals and the continents and countries where certain animals live as they expand their knowledge base. And we witness many children choosing challenging work with great passion for classroom learning. We find that even young children can teach themselves well if the environment is enriched and sufficiently broad.

As the child moves from inside the Montessori classroom to the world outside, she may notice or we may bring to her the awareness that there are others in our world who do not receive the world as they do. Some children are in need of simple gifts like clothing and even food. We want to help our children be able to give some of these simple gifts to others less fortunate. To that end we support a number of community programs and have created some of our own ways of giving:

- Mayor's Food Drive – Our students donate food for our local community.
- The Center's own Holiday Gift Shop - A percentage of our proceeds go to a local charity that the children select.
- The Center's own Valentine shoes donation and gift delivery, From our Hearts to Their Feet – Our students donate shoes to the children at Selby Preschool, some of whom are homeless.
- Our Level 3 students visit Turning Points, a Coalition for the Homeless, to donate time and items.

These are just a few ways that Center helps our students understand the power of giving back to our community. Our kindergarteners just had the pleasure of visiting Selby Preschool to donate shoes to those in need, this being our 15th year with Center families having donated over 750 pairs of shoes over the years. As our year moves forward we hope that you are finding ways to give back to our community and help your children learn about the power of giving back as well as the impact of receiving.



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PRIMARY 1

This week was filled with celebrations starting with a fun Valentine's Day card exchange and finishing with a celebration of the Chinese New Year! The children love these special moments and sharing them with their friends.

With the Chinese New Year, we have been studying China through books and hands-on activities. We made paper lanterns, push pinned Chinese themed shapes, colored a mask and decorated our classrooms with a number of Chinese symbols. We enjoyed eating apples and oranges as the Chinese people do during this time of the year and had an opportunity of using chopsticks to taste lo mein noodles. This was a great way to practice finger dexterity and most importantly work on being patient and flexible in learning how to use chopsticks. We will continue our study of China for the next two weeks and would like to extend an invitation to you to encourage your child to share an object of interest from that country.

On Friday, our kindergarteners joined those from the other Primary classes and we all took part in our annual From Our Hearts to Their Shoes program where we deliver new, donated shoes to the children of Selby Preschool. As usual, we were welcomed with such warmth and everyone had a chance to play and enjoy lunch together. Many smiles were on the children's faces as they received their gifts and our children as well felt the joy of the moment. We are so thankful for your help with the shoe donations and the opportunity this provides our children to practice being generous.

We would like you to mark your calendars to join our school-wide celebration on Friday, March 2nd at 5:30pm. The Primary children will be performing songs, E1 will put on a short play and the E2 students will parade their plant cell creations. Our Scholastic Book Fair will be running that evening as well as the four days prior to that, with many opportunities for you to make a visit. You may hear your child telling you about his or her visit to the book fair. Each year, the Primary children have the opportunity to visit the Book Fair during the school day and select a number of books to put on their wish list. The wish list is usually sent home with the child as a way to talk about books and invite you to join the fair with them. More details will be communicated to you from the school on hours it will be open.

We would like to thank **Finnegan's** family and **Gwen & Sawyer's** family for borrowing a great selection of books from the library to help us enhance children's learning about China and enjoy story time.

Quotes for Thought:

Travel stories teach geography; insect stories lead the child into natural science; and so on. The teacher, in short, can use reading to introduce her pupils to the most varied subjects; and the moment they have been thus started, they can go on to any limit guided by the single passion for reading.

Please remember to
always check your child's
Friday folder for
important information
and notices from the
teachers.



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PRIMARY 2

What an exciting week it has been! We celebrated Valentine's Day, Chinese New Year and had a field trip all in a week! Chinese New Year festivities were a hit. It was priceless watching the children try out chopsticks with noodles.

Love has certainly filled the air! The children really enjoyed spreading love across campus, in the classroom and on the playground. So many hugs, cards and sweet words have fluttered around. We loved our Love Rock project. Each child hand painted a rock then together with my help each wrote a word that he or she feels means love. We then hid them around campus for others to find on Valentines' Day. We hope you enjoyed them if you found one. Some other favorites were the card making station, threading ribbon through hearts and transferring small beads with a tweezers onto a heart pattern peg board.

Our kindergarten children had a great time participating in our annual From Our Hearts to Their Shoes program with a visit to Selby Preschool to deliver the shoes and play and eat lunch with their students. Everyone was so polite and had fun on the journey to and from the school on our school bus with Ms. Betsy. Thank you to everyone who contributed to this cause, it was greatly appreciated.

Our artist of the month is Wassily Kandinsky. Born in Moscow in 1866, Kandinsky was a Russian painter and art theorist and is credited with painting one of the first recognized purely abstract works. I hope you all enjoyed the Kandinsky inspired Valentine cards the children made for their loved ones. We had fun sequencing the different sized hearts.

School will be closed Monday in observance of President's Day. Don't forget to send your child in with one- coin each of a penny, nickel, dime and quarter in a labeled Ziploc bag if you haven't already.



Thank
you!

To **James** for bringing in flowers and healthy snack this week



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PRIMARY 3

In our science studies this week using a human heart model, we discussed the differences between the Valentine's heart and the human heart. We talked about the many functions of the heart organ and the importance of keeping our heart healthy. As a group we talked about the different ways that we can do this with the students coming up with the following ideas: eating more fruit and vegetables, exercising everyday, not eating candy. Using a stethoscope the children were able to listen to their hearts and then their friends' hearts. We also read the book *Good Enough to Eat*, by Izzy Rockwell, to help the students better understand how our bodies function and get new ideas on how to keep healthy. We look forward to making and trying some of the great healthy recipes in the book.

Our Valentine's Day was full of fun, crafts and friendship activities. We wanted to celebrate this day by having a little less candy and a lot more fun with friends and it was a huge success. In our circle time we talked about what is a friend, how do we treat friends, and what we like to do with friends. I read the books *Little Blue and Little Yellow* by Leo Lionni and *The Rainbow Fish* by Marcus Pfister. Some children made friendship bracelets for their classmates and others decided to make friendship cards. As group we made a friendship chain, where each student added various colors of paper links to the chain. At the end of the day we took our friendship chain to the playground and placed it along the fence to see how long it was. We all sang the song *The More We Play Together* throughout the day and shared paper hearts with our classmates.

On Thursday we celebrated the Chinese New Year 2018 which is the Year of the Dog. We watched a child friendly video about how people in China celebrate the new year holiday. At lunch time, students enjoyed noodles, and practiced honing their fine motor skills using chop sticks. As a treat each child took home a fortune cookie.

As part of our new year celebration we also found China on our map and compared the distance from Florida to China and from Florida to some of the other continents. Dominoes are a Chinese invention, and I taught the students the basics of how to play with them for fun and use them to do some math work as well. We defined and worked to understand the terms extinct and endangered. This led us to read more about the Giant Panda, why they are endangered, what they eat, where they live and ways that humans can help them. For a craft the students made panda puppets using white and black paper with different textures.

The kindergartens loved their Friday field trip to Selby Preschool to deliver the donated shoes as part of our annual From Our Hearts to Their Feet program. They made new friends and had lunch with the Selby preschool students. Thank you to former Center teacher Missy Eckenrod for allowing us to visit and be a part of the Selby Preschool community. Thank you also to our families for generously providing shoes for the students.

We are going to finish out our snack schedule for the rest of the year and I will be assigning families each a week to bring community snack for the class. Please check your child's folder for more information on the upcoming community snack weeks. If for any reason you can not participate the week that is assigned to you, let me know and I will do my best to change the week for you. We have 13 students and we serve snack twice a day five days a week. Thank you so much for your help and cooperation.

A surprise thank you to Center Montessori for installing the new water fountain system by our playground. The kids love to have filtered and cool water after their recess time and are enjoying having the option of using the water fountain or filling their water bottles at the new cold water dispenser.



Friendship chain in P3!



To **Madison B.** and **Dylan P.** for providing community snack the past two weeks.