

Montessori Pathways'

News

April, 2014

"The secret of good teaching is to regard the child's intelligence as a fertile field in which seeds maybe sown to grow under the heat of flaming imagination"

Maria Montessori



"My Tulip Garden" by Elena- South room

Coming School Events

- *The registration for the Summer Camp and upcoming 2014-2015 school year is in full swing*

If your child(ren) will be attending *Montessori Pathways Summer Camp*, please return the Enrollment Application with **\$30.00 registration fee** (**\$15.00 for the second child**) no later than **May 15th**.

If you have decided to continue your child's education at *Montessori Pathways*, please complete the Re-Enrollment Form and return it to us along with the **\$50.00 re-enrolment fee** (**\$25.00 for the second child**) and the **10% tuition security deposit** no later than **May 15th**.

This will ensure a place for your child and help the school be prepared for Summer Camp and the next school year at the proper time.

- We hope the weather will be on our side and we will be able to make our school beautiful. Join us for *Planting Mornings* on **Wednesday, May 7 at 9:00am-10:30am**

It would be great if every child could bring at least one plant on Monday or Tuesday to have a chance to participate in the creation of the Pathways' Garden.

- **Saturday, May 10 at 10am- 1:00 pm - Open House.** We invite you to come and discuss any questions you may have.

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- We would be glad to see everybody at our *“The End of the Year” Celebration* on **Wednesday, May 21st at 5:00pm** at The First Congregational Church in Crystal Lake. The detailed information will be sent soon.

- *The Last Day of School is Friday, May 23.*
- *The school will be closed for Summer Camp preparation on May 26-May 30.*
- *The Summer Camp begins on Monday, June 2.*

As always, if you have any comments, questions, or concerns, feel free to contact us via e-mail
montpathways@hotmail.com

Notes from the Elementary Class (North room)

Ms. Karen

Connecting:

Thank you so much for taking time out of a busy schedule to get together last Monday and Tuesday, just to have a conversation with families. I had such a good time getting to know everyone in a little more detail and to feel connected to each family a little more. These conversations give teachers an insight into each child a point of view that we cannot experience. And so I just a little closer and feel the power of our joint work with the children.

Along those lines, I want to send work home each Monday so we can stay in touch and your child may be able to share some of his previous week's work and ideas. If we wait longer than one week, it is hard for the child to share what was important to him in his school work. Just to emphasize: the written work that is brought home is not a definitive summary of what he was involved in during the school week. Often your child participates in group lessons, observes other children's work, acts as a teacher to another child in the class, or is, perhaps in the midst of a long term project. What is sent home is a glimpse into the preceding week.



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Special events:

Last week, we welcomed 3 children from the Agress family to bring their musical instruments and play for the class. The ENTIRE class was focused and participated in the event for almost an hour - ---we had to stop because it was lunch time. The kids (Jr. High age) brought their instrument's: clarinet, trumpet, percussion. They paled for the class and talked about how each instrument was played, what was special for each instrument, and even gave the kids a chance to "play the trumpet". The Agress kids had a great time as did our class!!!

The "Wind Musical Instruments" material was presented to the kids right after the concert and the kids were excited to see pictures of familiar instruments.



We have introduced *a few science experiments* these past weeks: one with air and water, the most recent with propulsion. It seemed to capture the imagination of the children as several reproduced the experiment with a paper replica of the experiment. It did cause a flurry of building planes, helicopters, and rockets.



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Problems solving and cooperation:

The Kids recognized and solved the problem of "who will make snack today!!!!!!!!!!!" A volatile issue. The class came up with the idea of having a schedule of who exactly would make snack on a given day! And since there are 10 kids in the class and 5 days, it fortuitously came out that there would be 2 kids working TOGETHER to decide on what snack would be and the amount that needed to be prepared each day. It is interesting to watch the kids working cooperatively (not always) to be in charge of and set up the snack --- an important element in the morning class. It is the perfect situation for kids learning to problem solve and COOPERATE.

Emphasis:

We have initially placed emphasis on geometry: vocabulary, creating 2 dimensional drawings, 3 dimensional shapes and seeing our environment with "geometric eyes". We have also worked with application of math (charts and graphs) to be able to interpret information. Another area of study for the older kids was analysis of squaring and analysis of the trinomial cube. Always in math, an emphasis is on precision and completion.



Highlights from Ms. Terri's Art class:

- We drew our shoe and then drew small "stick" people all over it (skiing, climbing, swimming, etc.)
- Painting of African animals of our choice
- Making Book marks using patterns and markers
- Creating Place Cards using watercolor for table work and lunch time



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Thank you: to Emma's family for the beautiful flowers they have been sending. It has added "a touch of Spring" to the room.

Field trip:

As you know, the kids have been studying the Common Needs of People. In continuing with this study and building on our visit from President Lincoln in February, we traveled to the McHenry County Historical Society Museum. We were interested to see that the ways people lived and met their needs in the past was so different from present time. We visited a small one-room schoolhouse and an 1847 log cabin with a tour guide to answer our questions.

The kids were surprised to hear that a family of 6 people could live together in this small cabin with only one bed and no windows. Sometimes even their farm animals lived inside with them.

They were excited to see what the old school looked like and to learn why we have summer break now (because many years ago the students had to stop studying during the summer and help their parents on a farm). Did you know that the teachers started their mornings with collecting the logs to burn the stove to make their classrooms warm?

These are some quotes from our students regarding the experience they had at the museum:

- *"I loved the Old town and the school."*
- *"The inside of the barn was very interesting."*
- *"The most interesting room was the Mail Room."*
- *"I liked the typewriter."*
- *"We liked typing on the typewriter."*
- *"There was a big silver bell."*
- *"I liked the really beautiful dishes."*
- *"The whole museum was awesome!"*

The enjoyment of teaching:

The rewards of teaching, (among others) are to hear "I can do anything", "Can I do another book?", "I want to write a story", "This is going to be the challenge of a lifetime", etc. As those remarks echo throughout the room, one has a feeling that LIFE is happening and children are challenging themselves in many ways.

And to see that the children are applying information on their own: "I want to do a book of curved shapes", "I want to make a list of parallel lines", "I want to trace all the shapes and label them". At the moment, there is an interest in 2 and 3 dimensional shapes. Also, a flurry of "writing stories."

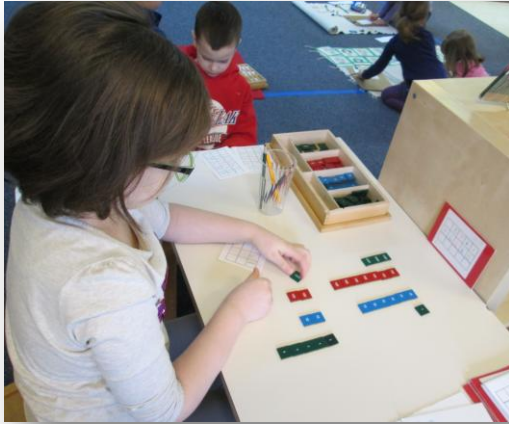


Best regards,

Miss Karen

Kindergarten Extended Day News

Ms. Patty



Wow! It has been another busy month of learning and creating in the Kindergarten classroom! It has been a pleasure to witness the children become confident in their ability to learn, inquisitive about the world, affirmed in their own worth and respectful of others.

In the math area, we have been practicing measurement with a ruler. We learned how to find inches and half-inches on the ruler. We then used the ruler to measure items in our classroom (table, pencil, shoes, etc.).

We also completed our very own measurement booklets.

In Language, we continue to practice reading comprehension, sentence writing, and word-building with the moveable alphabet. We have also been practicing sight words. Sight words help the child advance their reading ability by training them to identify high frequency words on sight through memorization, short-cutting the moment it takes to decode the meaning of the word. We have been using a variety of methods to practice our sight words (flash cards, sight-word “garden game”, and word search pages). The strategies of these “works” help to improve reading skills and vocabulary confidence.



In the Sensorial area, the children created their very own three dimensional shapes of the pink tower, brown stairs, and geometric solids!

In Ms. Terri’s Art class kids made several interesting projects:

- Drawing, outlining, and painting Robin birds in the nests

- Creating the pictures of yellow Daffodil flowers with purple background, using craypas and watercolors (complimentary colors)



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- Clay Turtles made of Terra Cotta clay using rolled coils and pencil pots
- Drawing Self-Portraits step by step using mirrors to look at our faces



We were invited to join the Elementary classroom for a *special music concert*. Ms. Karen invited her neighbors (3 talented young musicians) to play their instruments for our classes. We learned about the clarinet, percussions and trumpet. The children were so excited to hear familiar songs played by the musicians!

Our special field trip this month has been our weekly *yoga classes to Akasha Yoga Studios*. We

learned many yoga poses that help our bodies become strong and flexible! In May, we will have a field trip to KaleidoScoops Ice Cream shop in downtown Crystal Lake.

During the remaining weeks of school, our focus of study will be science experiments (light, sound, magnet / non-magnetic).



Sincerely,

Ms. Patty

Notes from the South Classroom

Ms. Patty, Ms. Ambreen

Spring is a wonderful time of the year! We have watching the blossoming of the flowers and the budding of the trees. We have also have enjoyed watching the children blossom and grow throughout the school year! The children have excelled in independence, confidence, and leadership skills!

The month of April was another busy month for our classroom. In the practical life area, our art work consisted of creating beautiful spring pictures of birds, flowers, and bunny rabbits! The children continued to practice their sewing, baking, polishing, and table washing skills. All of which help them to develop their sense of order, concentration, coordination, and independence.



In the language area, the children have been introduced to the Preposition labeled picture cards. These cards help children learn seven words that describe the relationships between objects. Labeled picture cards show the location of a ball in relation to a basket: *in, on, above, behind, in front, beside, under*. The children use a real basket and a ball to match the position of each label picture card. Learning that words have different functions is a key to understanding language. The older children are using these words to create sentences. For example, “*The ball is **in front** of the basket*”. The children continue to practice sequencing, sounds, and reading comprehension on a daily basis.

In math, the children have been using the measuring works. They are showing a great understanding of small, medium, and large. In the coming month, they will be introduced to balancing scales and volume measurements.

In the cultural area, we are wrapping up our study of viviparous and oviparous animals. During the month of May, our focus of study will be science experiments! We will learn about lights, sounds, magnets and many other activities! We are excited to have received our butterfly caterpillars and are observing their changes every day!

In celebration of Earth Day, the children have been learning how they can reduce their carbon footprint. The children offered wonderful suggestions on how they could help make the planet Earth a better place. We decided that we wanted to celebrate Earth Day by making our playground beautiful! We all helped to tidy the playground and we even planted our own sunflower seed. Afterwards, we enjoyed a dirt cup snack! *Thank you to all the parents that contributed their time, supplies, and food for our snack!*

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We would like to welcome our new friend, William, to our classroom. We celebrated Aidan, Zoey, and Selene's birthday this month!

Ms. Ambreen and I would like to thank everyone that came to the "I Can Do It" parent/child work night. The children had a great time showing you their "challenging" works!



Our Chicken Soup poem for the month of April:

*In April I will go away
To far off Spain or old Bombay
And dream about hot soup all day.
Oh my oh once
Oh my oh twice,
Oh my oh chicken soup with rice.*

Written by Maurice Sendak

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We hope to see everyone at our End of The Year Celebration on May 21st! The children have been rehearsing their special songs and poems for their performance!



Warmly,
Ms. Patty and Ms. Ambreen

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Notes from the East classroom:

Ms. Christine, Ms. Laxmi



Happy Spring to all our families! It looks and finally feels like Spring has sprung! Our Painted Lady Butterflies have arrived as very small caterpillars, and we have been watching them grow; very soon, they will form their chrysalis', metamorphosis will occur, and we will release them on a warm, sunny day. Many of the children have enjoyed Parts of the Butterfly, and the Life Cycle of a Butterfly work within the Science area of the classroom. We even created our own butterflies with special detail to the symmetry of their wings (how they are the same on both sides).

Some popular art activities have been making "April showers bring May flowers" pages, Robin nests with eggs (we even enjoyed looking at a real nest with eggs), making paper mache Earths, coloring Easter eggs, and numerous springtime crafts that the children enjoy making daily.



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We have planted grass seeds in clear cups which allowed us to observe the root structure of a plant. This coincides with various Botany activities such as

Parts of a Seed, Parts of a Root, The Life Cycle of a Plant. In addition, during our Earth Day observation, we are in the process of sprouting bean plants to bring home and put in soil when the weather is a little warmer - we are observing the seeds daily to see when the root sprouts from the seed case.....



We created a Rose garden print from celery stalk bases and added bees, caterpillars to complete this colorful picture!

It was wonderful to see so many families at our "Let Me Show You" night on the 16th. Your students were so eager to show you their favorite work, and the time you spent watching them reinforced their pride in their accomplishments. We hope you enjoy the fun and candid pictures of our line-time that night!



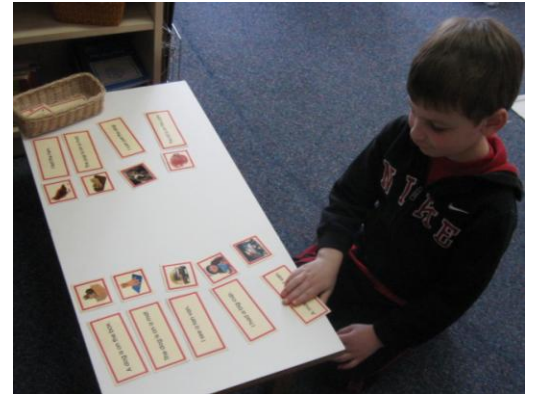
Thank you for your continued support to our Sharing Basket; this allowed us to color eggs, create fun snacks (the egg salad mini sandwiches were a favorite with 17 out of 20 students!), and food preparation activities. We also appreciate your help with egg cartons, and mud cup ingredients. Huge thanks to all our parents, who continuously and regularly offer help and support with our classroom projects.

Thank you to all the parents who came to us for Earth Day celebration and helped kids to have a lot of fun and make our school beautiful!



With one month left of the school year, we have seen significant growth in each and every child in our class. Whether it is in their reading, math, language/writing skills or their social and confidence levels in their abilities, it has been the most rewarding year for all of us. Thank you so very much for giving your child this Montessori experience. It truly is a gift that pays off in the years ahead!

We look forward to our next event, Planting Day, and hope to see you on a warm, beautiful Spring day!



Warmest wishes,

Ms. Christine & Ms. Laxmi

Notes from the Pre-K Extended class:

Ms. Ambreen

The month of April began with lots of energy and joy around us as we started to witness the signs of springtime.

The weather started to warm up a little and it seemed like everything was awakening from a deep sleep. This helped us escape the winter blues and spread the cheer of spring like the robins singing from the trees.

In Math, we continued working on addition and studied Quadrilaterals. It was very interesting to see how different shapes with different names all come together into one category. We also worked on graphing, which was a new concept for the kids.



In Language, we made our beautiful books on springtime. April is the National Month of Poetry, so with the beautiful daffodils growing outside our classroom we were inspired to read the Poem 'Daffodils' by William Wordsworth, an English poet who was also born in April.

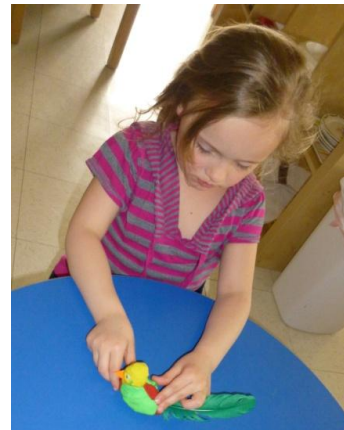
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In Science, we studied parts of a plant and the life cycle of a frog.

In Social Studies, we learned about the Great Amazon Rainforest in the continent of South America and the animals that live there.

In Art, we made our beautiful Robin paintings, egg paintings with a riddle, realistic daffodil paintings, and our bird's nest with birds.



The Pre-k kids really enjoyed making and decorating the delicious carrot cake to share with their families in the spirit of Easter, hope you all enjoyed it.

Parents please review the April folder with your kids and I would like to ask you to please send me your feedback and comments on their learning experience in the afternoon Pre-k class. I will deeply appreciate your input as it will help me work with your kids more effectively, since each day is a learning experience and there is always room for improvement.



Happy springtime to everyone,

Ms. Ambreen

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Notes from the afternoon classroom:

Ms. Donna

This month had us looking for signs of Spring as well as an unexpected arrival of more white stuff (SNOW). The snow did melt much faster; buds could be seen on the bushes and trees. Our mint plants were pushing up from the ground along with other green plants as well as daffodils starting to bloom. Birds were seen gathering grass and twigs for their nests. We have enjoyed watching the birds drink and take a bath in the water on top of our sandbox.

Art: "Am I a rabbit or a duck?" (if you held the paper a certain way it would look like a duck and if you moved it slightly it would look like a rabbit). We created "A Chick" picture using our hands for wings and adding some feet, made large Eggs and Flowers (trace, color, cut and for the flower making a large stem with leaves), recycled plastic bottles and caps to create flowers (printed with the bottom of different sizes of plastic bottles by dipping the bottom into paint and then printing on paper, caps could be used to fill in the centers of the prints or used as smaller flowers. We then drew green stems and leaves with markers).



A yarn design made by using card stock paper in the shape of a square with 10 - 12 slits around the square. The kids would tape the yarn on the back of the card stock and wind the yarn to any slit and continued this until they were done. Then they would cut off the yarn and tape it to the back.

New works: blocks with cars, small stuffed animals that they could play with or draw them and write stories

about, Tinker Toys and several Mr. Potato Heads.

Flannel Board: "It Looked Like Spilt Milk" by Charles G. Shaw. This is a book about what clouds might look like. The children could put up the shape on the flannel board and if they wanted they could also put the word for the shape on the flannel board.

Games: Musical chairs (the children drew a flower put their name on the paper and then tapped the picture to a chair). When the music stopped they had to find their chair before they could sit down.



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“Counting down” game: Five children each had a cutout bunny, as the poem was read each one would move and sit down until there were no more bunnies left.

Outdoors: The children have enjoyed hiding plastic eggs and looking for them. We would then check the paper that had the number of the colored eggs. We would hunt until we had all of them. Then another child would hide the eggs again, and again.

Making nests for eggs (balls) is still a favorite activity. Throwing a tennis ball with a partner and catching with a Velcro mitt is enjoyed by many. Tee Ball is another favorite outside activity.

*As always,
Ms. Donna*

