

Montessori Pathways' News

April 2015

"The child can only develop fully by means of experience in his environment. We call such experience 'work'."

-Maria Montessori



"Happy Spring!"
(Kindergarten Art Project)

Notes from Ms. Alena



April was a fairly busy month for us. After preparing Easter gifts for their families, children welcomed the parents to their classrooms for the **Parent/Child Night "Come and Work Together!"** to show them their favorite works, which they are now able to do independently during the morning work cycle. Thank you, parents, for coming. Your participation in the kids' school life is very important for them.

They were so excited to work together with their dads and so proud to have them at school! It only took 1 hour to get all the work done since we had a really great team. Montessori Pathways team and students would like to extend our appreciation to dads for the tremendous help during "Spruce it Up: Doughnuts with Dads!" event.

Our next very successful event was **"Spruce it Up: Doughnuts with Dads!"** Despite the windy and chilly weather, our students were eager to help.



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The hit of the month was definitely the **"Cook-Out / Sleepover"** event for our kindergarten and elementary students. It was an absolutely new, but thrilling experience for everybody.

Thank you very much parents for letting your kids stay overnight together with their friends. It was an unforgettable experience for them. You can find more information and pictures about it in Mr. Matt's and Ms. Karen's news below.

I can only add that upon returning home, my son, who is a part of the elementary team, began to cry after a couple of hours simply because he was missing his friend already and wanted to return to school. Then he re-created the sleepover game with his favorite animal toys and tried to relive every moment of the event. This was a very emotional observation and meant a lot for me as a mom.



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Coming School Events

- **The registration for the Summer Camp and upcoming 2015-2016 School Year is wrapping up.**

- ✓ If your child(ren) will be attending **Montessori Pathways Summer Camp**, please return the Enrollment Application with the \$50.00 registration fee (\$25.00 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 \$100.00 re-enrollment fee (\$50.00 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 on time.

- We hope the weather will cooperate and we will be able to make our school beautiful. Join us for "**Planting Day: Muffins with Moms!**" event on **Friday, May 8 at 9:00am-10:30am**

It would be great if every child could bring at least one plant on Tuesday or Wednesday, May 5 or 6 to have a chance to participate in the creation of the Pathways' Garden.

- **May 4 - May 8 - Teacher Appreciation Week.**
- **Saturday, May 9 at 10am- 1:00 pm - Open House.**
We invite you to come and discuss any questions you may have.
- We would be glad to see everybody at our "**The End of the Year**" Celebration on **Thursday, May 21st at 5:00pm** at The First Congregational Church in Crystal Lake. Detailed information will be sent soon.

- **The Last Day of School is Friday, May 22.**
- **The school will be closed for Summer Camp preparation May 25-May 29.**
- **The Summer Camp begins Monday, June 1.**

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

Warmly,
Ms. Alena

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Notes from the Elementary Class (North room)

Mr. Matt

April is gone and now I'm sure May will be the month that we can finally put those winter coats away. We started off the month with a very artistic project: *Faberge Eggs*. It was a very involved papier mache project that consisted of building, designing, and painting. The end result was gorgeous Easter presents for their loved ones.



April was also the month that we really got into *the interactive writing process as a class*. Interactive writing is a way of writing a story as a group. The class decides what the story is going to be about comes up with ideas together and write jointly on easel paper. Students propose ideas for sentences and their classmates help them refine them and add them to the story. This is a wonderful opportunity for everyone to be involved. Students also help each other out when the student who is writing doesn't know how to spell a word. Other students will assist them or use a dictionary to help.

The catalyst that helped get this aspect of our classroom off the ground was an easel that the students and I built after school out of spare parts from the basement of the school. Many students who stayed after school helped measure and cut and design this apparatus that allows us to do interactive writing in an effective way.

In math the first graders continued to refine their *multiplication* and are getting much stronger in both their *fact work and long multiplication*. Second grade has been working with *2 digit multipliers and division*. Our third graders continue with division and have mostly moved to *abstract multiplication* ever with *2 digit multipliers*.

We also worked with *measurement* pretty extensively. I created a work based on Stamp Game which helps children understand how to do operations with measurements (in the English system).



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This was useful because we also went more in depth with *perimeter and area* and some students are working to figure out how these two ideas relate and which shapes with the same perimeter have the greatest area and similar questions.



In language we began work with *sentence analysis* which is the Montessori work for what you remember as sentence diagramming. In this work the students look at the sentence and ask questions about it to break it down into its parts. The first two questions the students work with are: "What is the action?" and "Who/what is performing the action?" These two questions give the students the subject and predicate. The third graders have also begun working with "Who/what is receiving the action?" which gives the direct object.



In geography we finished working on *North America*. We worked through *Antarctica* which went pretty fast since there is not a lot of wildlife or countries or much of anything to discuss. Then we started working with *South America*.

In zoology we reviewed all the *vertebrates* and are finishing up the rest of the *invertebrates*.

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In April we also had our **first overnight event**. Although the weather didn't quite cooperate with us we had a lot of fun. The students did the majority of the work for food preparation. We had a wonderful dinner with all of the kindergarteners. Afterwards we went outside and had s'mores. Then the students went to their respective classrooms and the elementary students changed into their pajamas and played board games for a while. It was a little bit of a struggle to get everyone to go to sleep with all of the excitement.

In the morning the students made fruit salad and pancake/waffle mix. Then they moved an astounding 4400 pounds of new rubber mulch (that was delivered late) onto our playground. I think the students had a lot of fun and had a lot of valuable experiences. Many of the students had never slept anywhere without family, they were fantastic in helping with everything (as usual), and they were very supportive of each other. You could really feel how strong of a community they are.



*Warm regards,
Mr. Matt*

Notes from the Art Class (*Kindergarten and Elementary*)

Ms. Susan

In April, the art class finished their acrylic paintings, and then worked on their watercolor and drawing skills. They chose subjects ranging from animals to cars to seascapes, transferred them to watercolor paper, and rendered the subject and backgrounds. Then, they added details with marker and colored pencil. With their experience from previous projects, they were able to work more independently with the media, and explore their creativity with a variety of techniques and subject matter.

In celebration of naturalist John Muir's birthday, the art class also explored drawing birds' nests, learning to use texture, light and shadow to create a sense of volume and space.



*Sincerely,
Ms. Susan*

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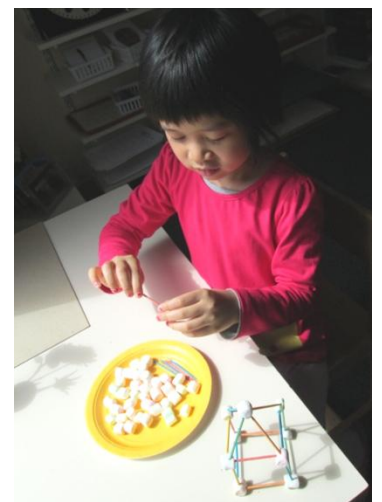
Kindergarten Extended Day News

Ms. Karen

Is it just me or does Easter seem like eons ago? Looking back (seems like way back), *the Easter egg coloring* was a highlight. So fun just experimenting with blending colors, etc. And, as it turns out, a great science experiment --- observing water displacement by the egg. Of course, the activity included water measurement, mixing colors, and cooperation ---sharing of colors.



Geometry was another fun project. The children all spent the afternoon *constructing 3 dimensional shapes* by connecting the marshmallows with toothpicks. They learned that we had to let them dry to "set" the shape. The activity led to experimenting, vocabulary development and just plain fun. Geometry has emerged as a focal point. In addition to the above group activity, several children constructed the Sierpinski triangle (an equilateral triangle made of smaller equilateral triangles), while others labeled the parts of the triangle, square, and circle. Vocabulary is essential in understanding geometry.



The culmination of the month, of course, was THE SLEEPOVER. What a great experience! We realize this was the first time for many, but what better way to have your first sleepover that with good friends whom you know well and to be in an environment that feels like home. The highlight of the highlight, for me, was all of us cooking marshmallows for s'mores and then just enjoying the fire at night and singing songs together.

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We had 100% participation. Thank you for your child's participation. What a fun time! One child woke up in the morning and the first thing he said was: "That sleepover was so much fun!" In addition to the actual sleeping over, we cooked hot dogs over an open fire, and made breakfast for our parents. During dinner we took small group trips to watch Mr. Alex cook the hot dogs and breakfast gave us a chance to practice measuring, stirring, cracking eggs, and cutting fruit for the salad. The children were so HAPPY to be engaged in meaningful projects. They did everything to prepare breakfast for their family except the actual cooking of the pancakes. Miss Masha was there to help with that. But the children were active observers—watching for which pancakes are ready to flip and helping with the spatula too. I'm sure we all hope this becomes an annual Montessori Pathways tradition!!



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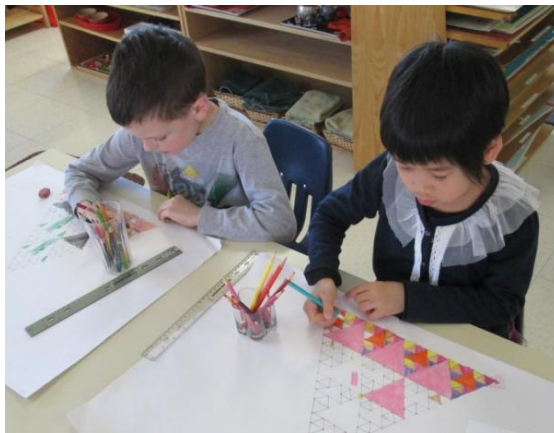
PS Request from one of the kindergartners on Monday morning:

"I wish we could have a ten day sleepover! That was so fun. It would take 2 weeks because we do not come to school on the weekends."

Me: "You mean we only come to school on M, T, W, Th, and F?"

Child: "Yeah, so it would be two weeks because we come 5 days during the week and $5 + 5$ makes 10. So that would be our 10 day sleepover!" (So far, that is not "on the books!")

In the classroom, we are awaiting the emergence of the butterflies from their cocoon. The caterpillars have arrived. Of course, it seems like little is happening. But patience is required. We do not control the time factor. The butterflies will emerge. And we will have a ceremony to release them. If we are REALLY lucky, we will see the process as it happens. Up close. Now we are in the waiting period! So much life in the classroom!



Best regards,

Ms. Karen

Notes from the East Classroom:

Ms. Christine, Ms. Laxmi

Even though the weather hasn't fully cooperated, our classroom feels like springtime with our caterpillars spinning their chrysalises and the students' anticipation of butterflies to come. We have studied the *Life Cycle of a Butterfly* and talked about how their wings have a symmetrical pattern - some children painted their own butterflies with their own, artistic patterns. We hopefully will be releasing our butterflies on a warm day later this week.

We also celebrated Earth Week with our "*Spruce it Up: Doughnuts with Dads!*" event and made our own green and blue (land and water) Earth project.

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Everyone was interested in ways to Renew, Reuse & Recycle; you may be surprised by how enterprising their ideas were and may be asked/encouraged to participate at home.



As the end of the year approaches, we are so happy to have seen much growth and maturity in your children. Children have developed such confidence in making independent choices and challenging work. Many of our younger students choose "big" work such as maps, addition equations and advanced language; we have seen much progress with handwriting and solidification of sounds/reading and math facts. Your children are self directed and choose their daily projects without much help or direction at this point.



We are looking forward to planting before "Muffins With Moms!" and have been practicing songs for our End of the Year Celebration in May.

Birthday wishes were celebrated with Ashley, Carson and Oliver; we know they have wonderful things in store for the year ahead!

As always, thank you for your help in sustaining a successful classroom - Sharing Basket, offers of help and an open line of communication are a key to this! THANK YOU! We look forward to seeing you in May!

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Warmly,
Ms. Christine, Ms. Laxmi

Notes from the South Classroom

Ms. Ambreen

April the fourth month of the year started with the onset of the spring season. We in south room were very happy and delighted to observe the first signs of spring time. We noticed the birds flying back and heard them singing. Some of my young friends were very excited to see the squirrels and bunny rabbits hopping outdoors. The dullness of winter of is finally withering away and the colorful beauty of spring is spreading fast.



In the first week of April we received our Caterpillars and all my friends were very happy to see them. It was very interesting to observe how our kindergarteners eagerly shared their knowledge of the life cycle of a butterfly with their younger friends. The Caterpillars have now formed their chrysalis and we are patiently waiting to see the butterflies come out.

On April 15th we had a *special evening for parents*, all my friends were very excited to show their parents their favorite activities they enjoy working with during their work cycles. I extend my thanks to all the parents for coming in and letting their kids share their wonderful experiences with them.



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On April 22nd we celebrated *Earth Day*. It was a special morning with Dads. Our big Thanks to all dads who took their valuable time out to come and help in this 'Spruce it up' event.

On this Day we talked about the importance of recycling and conserving to help save our planet Earth. As a special project each of our friends *planted green bean seeds* in biodegradable planters. Each one of them is showing great responsibility towards taking care of their planter waiting anxiously to see the seeds sprouting.

I am very happy to share the good news with everyone that the *lily bulb we planted* for our classroom in March is growing tall and we can't wait to see the fragrant lily flower bloom.

During the month of April I observed all the kindergarteners being very busy with their big works. Congratulations to each one of them for being persistent and accomplishing their big projects.

One student successfully completed the big map of Africa with its countries and capital cities, another worked hard and created a beautiful poster of the 7 Continents, Countries and Capitals; yet another student did a lot of research and accomplished the challenge of learning nouns from A-Z.



While one student read books on turtles and created an amazing poster on them, another one worked on word building relating to parts of a flower and created a beautiful poster on flowers.



All the preschoolers and pre-ks worked on strengthening their fine and gross motor skills in practical life and Sensorial area. They also showed great interest in up keeping their challenge of learning their numbers and alphabet sounds.

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I extend my thanks to all families who participated in our sharing basket activity. My special thanks to Annabelle and her family for the beautiful tulip plant for our class. We have placed it next to our butterfly house to help them come out soon. I would like to end with a spring note, ' April Showers Bring May Flowers'. Happy Spring to Everyone!



Warmly,
Ms. Ambreen

Notes from Pre-K Extended Day Class

Ms. Ambreen



April is the month of blossoming. I witnessed the amazing metamorphosis of all of my pre-k friends. They are like butterflies out of their chrysalis. Now all ready to spread their wings and fly confidently in their new exciting Kindergarten year.

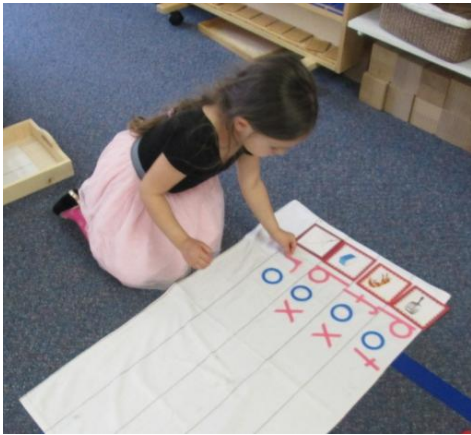
Working side by side with kindergarteners, engaged in challenging activities has helped them gain a lot of independence and confidence. During the month of April I observed that the Pre-ks were motivated a lot towards challenging works.

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They did addition, subtraction and fractions in the Math area, word building with movable alphabets and strengthening of reading skills through 3 part cards from botany and Zoology area in Language, and big maps from Geography area.

It gives me great pleasure to see that each of my Pre-k friend has blossomed into an independent confident thinker and eager explorer.

I wish all of them lots of good luck and well wishes for a successful Kindergarten year ahead.



*Sincerely,
Ms. Ambreen*

Notes from the Late Afternoon classroom:

Ms. Donna

Art: large egg and butterfly felt shapes were traced and then painted with the bottom of bottles, some of the children first made a vase on their paper before printed their flowers and then added stems; painting over masking tape, when dry, remove the tape; made a fossil out of salt - flour clay

Science: "Float or Sink" science experiment- the kids made a guess if object will float or sink and then put this object into the bucket filled with water to check.



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Games: "Little Bug, Little Bug" -- a child is hiding under a blanket; it must guess who it is. If they guess correctly the IT will choose a child to be the new It and pick the little bug.

"Little Mouse", a favorite of ours; IT hides the mouse under a house, then asks one of the children to name the color of the house that the mouse is hiding under. Should that child be incorrect another child gets a chance, etc. The one who guess correctly gets to hide the mouse next.

"Musical chairs" – popular forever

Music: Rhythm sticks - We learned a ready position, how to hit the floor with them and how to hit them together. We then learned how to do some pattern work together.

Story: "The Three Bears", sitting in a circle each child got to tell part of the story. When the person telling a part of the story heard the word STOP, they would stop and the next person would continue with the story. We even made up different endings to this story.



Our weather was warmer so we were able to spend more time outside. Bubbles were a big hit.

Looking forward to more warm weather,

Ms. Donna

