



# Montessori Pathways School News

October  
2016

## Notes from Head of School

by Ms. Alena Baradzina

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“It is not enough for the teacher to love the child. She must first love and understand the universe. She must prepare herself, and truly work at it.”

— Maria Montessori

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October is one of the busiest months. So many things should be done and prepared. It was so easy to be overwhelmed and frustrated. But our teaching team continued to work hard and brought a lot of fun and memorable moments to the education process.

Nevertheless, we would like to say thank you to all of our parents, who are helping and supporting us with making this process even more interesting and organized.

Your initiative and cooperation with the field trips organization, Halloween Party preparation, participation in parent evenings, and bringing different presentations and activities to the class are always appreciated by the teachers and kids.

## Planting Mums



~Thank you, friends,  
for keeping our playground so beautiful~

## UN Projects Exhibition



~Elementary students are giving a tour  
to their kindergarten friends~

## One of the Most Memorable Field Trips

On October 20, the kindergarten and elementary students from Montessori Pathways School were invited to the **Fox River Orthodontics Office** to participate in an educational program that was created and offered by Ariadna Torres-Gorena, Ana Sofia's mom.



As soon as we entered, we felt the very warm and friendly atmosphere there. The office did not seem like a medical office, but like a welcoming home. The medical team was very nice, kind, and prepared for presentations.

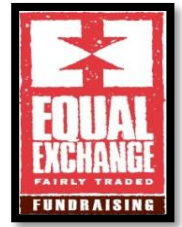
Our students had a wonderful hands-on experience learning about healthy food, oral hygiene, the difference between dentist and orthodontics doctors, and how an orthodontics could help them in the future.



*Thank you Ariadna and Fox River Orthodontics team for brining so much excitement to learning!*



## Equal Exchange Fundraiser



The deadline for our **Equal Exchange Fundraiser** is quickly approaching. We hope you've had a chance to look through the catalog and pick something for your friends or yourself!

*Private schools thrive from the support and donations of our families, as the tuition is only enough to cover the daily operations of the school. We depend on the support of our entire community to sustain our unique and progressive educational program. Every penny counts!*

We are looking forward to using the raised funds to renovate the kitchen cabinets and counter top, as well as replace the old tile floor in our North Room. We would like to thank everyone who has already submitted their orders.

Please note that the deadline is extended by **Friday, November 4th.**

<http://equalexchange.coop/sites/default/files/communitysales/fundraising/catalog.pdf>

SUPPORT US & A GREENER PLANET!

Your participation in the Equal Exchange Fundraiser helps our local community as well as small-scale family farmers and artisans around the globe.

100% ORGANIC & FAIR TRADE

## Children's Quotations:

- 4 and 5 year olds while observing a little one who was frustrated with rolling the rug: "Let's see if we can help him". (And they did)
- Two 5 year olds noticed that one of their younger friends began missing her mommy during movie night at school: "Would you like to join us?" (the child was happy until the end of the night)
- While discussing 'what peace means for you?' -
  - 8 years old: "When nobody is distracting while you are working"
  - 4 years old: "When nobody hurts your feelings"



“It is not how much we give but how much love we put into giving.”

~ Mother Theresa

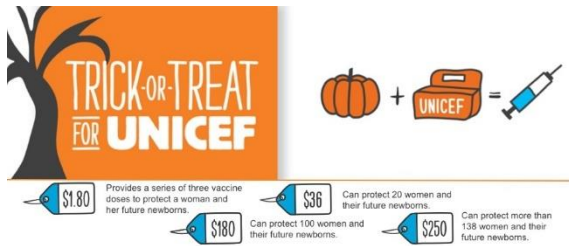
## Trick-or-Treat for UNICEF

Montessori education strives to create an awareness, respect and service for not only our immediate community, but the worldwide community as well.

The idea of peace education begins with young children learning to help others as a part of everyday life. As part of our commitment to providing the children an opportunity to participate in the service of others, Montessori Pathways kindergarten and elementary students are excited to participate in Trick-or-Treat for UNICEF.

It's a special opportunity for children in the U.S. to express themselves while helping others in need.

*The participation in Trick-or-Treat for UNICEF is completely optional.*



## Kids are Helping Kids at Montessori Pathways



## Our Special Guests



*~In October, the Kindergarten and Elementary students met a swimming instructor to learn about swimming safety. ~*



*~Ms. Beth from McHenry County Conservation District visited us with a Barred Owl and talked to our Elementary and Kindergarten students about Owls in Illinois. ~*



## Montessori Fun/Educational Family Night



*~We spent a wonderful time together talking about how to implement the Montessori approach at home. A wonderful addition to our meeting was John Paul's mom's presentation about how she successfully created the Montessori environment at home. Thank you, Colleen, for sharing your experience with us!!! ~*



*~ During the same evening our friends of all ages, including their siblings and some of our alumni, enjoyed the "Peanuts" movie, popcorn, and a fun night together. ~*



## Coming School Events

- **November 3 (Th) – By appt. – South Room Kindergarten Parent / Teacher Conferences**
- **November 4 (Friday) - By appt. - East Room Parent / Teacher Conference Day**
  - No School for Morning and School Day East room students.
  - Child care is provided for 4:15 / All Day East room students
- **November 7 (Monday) - By appt. - South Room Parent / Teacher Conference Day**
  - No School for Morning and School Day South room students.
  - Child care is provided for 4:15 / All Day South room students
- **November 8 (Tu) – By appt. – East Room Kindergarten Parent / Teacher Conferences**
- **November 14 – 18 – Giving with Gratitude Week – Crystal Lake Community Harvest Food Drive**

As Thanksgiving approaches, we would like to teach our students not only the importance of giving thanks, but also the importance of giving. Therefore, every year we participate in the Annual Community Harvest, which will benefit clients of the Crystal Lake Food Pantry. Detailed information will be sent soon.

## Coming School Events (continued)

- **November 18 (F) – School-Wide Field Trip to “Willy Wonka Jr.” play performed by Children’s Theatre of Elgin at The Hemmens Cultural Center in Elgin.**
- **November 24(Th) – 25(F) – No School (Thanksgiving Break)**
- **December 14 (W) - 5:00pm – Winter Celebration**

# News from the Elementary Class

(North Room)

by Ms. Amber

Knowledge is built on previous examples and experiences. Just like preschool students with the pink tower, elementary students are busy building the foundation of their elementary learning. By discussing and studying the word of the day and doing a dictionary study, they are building their vocabularies.

In Math, they are building numbers, equations, and math facts. In History, they are building a timeline of life on our planet. In Language, they are building sentences. In community, they are building better relationships with each other.

In our last newsletter, the concept of normalization was addressed and today more children can be observed as being normalized in the elementary classroom. Those students come in and go right to work. They know what to do next. They know to ask questions. They are making strides in balancing their priorities of work. They are seeking the next problem, challenge, presentation and/or opportunity. They are **engaged** in building their learning.



[Play video: "The Drama of the Archeozoic Ocean" by Upper Elementary Students](#)

“The child, in fact, once he feels sure of himself, will no longer seek the approval of authority after every step.”  
~Dr. Maria Montessori

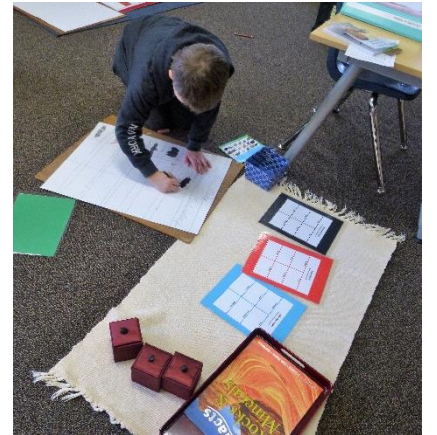
The Elementary classroom has been busy! Some days seem to fly by and suddenly it is dismissal time. From conferences the end of September to our Halloween celebration, students have had plenty to do and learn. Hopefully your child is sharing just a few of the great experiences gained in the classroom. In addition to weekly presentations in History, Geography, Zoology, Botany, Geometry, Spanish, Math, and Language, students learned about water and swim safety, owls of Illinois, UNICEF, the United Nations plus 14 other United Nations countries, and Ms. Amber shared her recent experience with jury duty. Students are also enjoying the times Ms. Brigitte is in the classroom and her insights on rocks, community, language, science, and books.

We often notice students need more sleep this time of year and/or a bigger breakfast. They are growing. Both weather and time changes do affect their sleep patterns. Autumn has provided us with wonderful weather for outdoor play, but please send your student with safe outdoor footwear, and a coat or jacket (maybe a hat and mittens, too) for chilly days.

Looking ahead, the holidays are just around the corner. It does not take much to get children excited, unsettled, or over-stimulated. As a Montessorian, it is important to mention the need to *try* to keep a regular routine for meals and bedtime, and *try* to minimize the “overwhelmingness” of the holiday season. Less can be better and healthier for children who have yet to learn to cope with a variety of situations and stimulations. Plus, it can make life calmer and easier for the parent! Life outside of school impacts life in school. A calm home life has a positive impact on a student’s school day. Help your child to be the best he or she can be!

# September Photo Gallery

## Elementary Class



# News from the Kindergarten Extended Day Class

by Ms. Karen



In October, we are still giving many individual and group lessons to build a child's repertoire of challenging and interesting challenges. They have grown comfortable, know how to access any supplies they need, have learned routines. It is a comfortable

feeling in the classroom of having settled in. children are helping each other and accomplishing skills they have been practicing: "I can tie" or "I can make a BIG triangle from many small triangles all by myself." "Look I found rectangles and squares in the classroom." "...And trapezoids"

October has also been a month of special activities, beginning with swim safety day. The presenters were excellent with clear, understandable rules for water safety. The children were attentive and had many pertinent questions and comments on the topic.

This month, we have also been talking about UNICEF (United Nations Children's Fund). We began by helping to establish an informational base: there are many places in the world where children do not have enough food, clean water or shelter. It is interesting how that experience of not having the necessary needs fulfilled is remote for our children. "If they don't have enough food, why don't they just go to the store and buy some?" "If they do not have money, why not just give them a card?". "Just go to a lake and get the water."

A video contributed to their understanding. So, UNICEF conversation along with United Nations Day has been a priority. But the children were also given good news: we can all help and that includes them. The children will find out more about UNICEF fund raising and, if they choose, they can sign up on the list of "I want to help the children of the world.". They will get their UNICEF boxes and we will practice/role play how we "Trick or Treat for UNICEF". Already they are all eager to get their boxes. It is something real that they can act on and know they made a difference. Of course, part of the interest will be to bring in all the money collected they each collected to to school. We can then sort, count and total up the amount Montessori Pathways children will contribute.

In celebration of United Nations Day, the elementary class created rich displays about a country they chose. They invited the kindergarteners to join them for an hour. All the projects were on display like a science fair. What a terrific afternoon! It was obvious that the older children loved sharing their special country with the

"The environment itself will teach the child, if every error he makes is manifest to him, without the intervention of a parent or teacher, who should remain a quiet observer of all that happens."

~Dr. Maria Montessori

kindergartners. I loved watching them! How great that we can enjoy students teaching students.

We made a special field trip to the orthodontist this month also. A big thank you the staff that welcomed us --- even in special Halloween costumes. What made the trip particularly valuable was the clarity and practicality of the information given about dental care. It ranged from foods to eat (or not) that are good for your teeth, to exactly how to brush your teeth, and yes, brush your tongue. Because the information was clear and everything was demonstrated, the children took in many ideas. Just an incomplete list of what they recalled included 15 specific points that they generated.

A visit today from MCCD brought a captivating visitor: a barred owl. Main points included in the talk were how the owl was particularly adapted for hunting food.

In math, we have been emphasizing place value using the concrete materials. But there has also been a flurry of activity around the memorization of facts. Both are foundational to understanding and liking math. Our math is also moving into the geometry area.

Geography continued adding system of lakes and archipelago.

*Special vocabulary this month:* the above geography terms, quadrilateral, trapezoid, nutrition, adaptation, talons, nocturnal, camouflage, carnivore, predator.

I am looking forward to meeting with everyone during the November conference.



# September Photo Gallery

## Kindergarten Extended Day Class





# News from the Art Class (Kindergarten and Elementary)

by Ms. Linda

We've had a great month exploring fall and Halloween themes in art.

**In the kindergarten class**, we used warm colors to create autumn trees by outlining the students arms and hands to create the trunk and branches and then used paper mosaic for the leaves. We continued the use of paper mosaic by creating pumpkin patches using layers of paper.



**In the elementary class**, we have continued working on drawing skills. The students are learning that it's okay for all their drawings to look different from one another. We may start with the same basic directions, but then they are encouraged to add their own creative elements to create the finished drawing. They have done some fantastic imaginary monsters and beautiful, colorful, sugar skulls.



The students have been working on their drawing skills as well. They created some wonderful imaginary monsters in oil pastel. We are currently working on a drawing of a scarecrow which the children will be painting.



# News from the South Room

## by Ms. Andrea

Wow! It's almost the end of October already, it's amazing how the year is flying by and how much is going on in the South classroom.

The children are noticing the change in seasons and making many great observations about the autumn landscape and weather. On the playground, they are using their practical life skills of caring for their environment by helping to rake leaves and gather them into landscaping bags. The children have also been going on leaf hunts, collecting various colors and shapes of leaves. We will be using these leaves for several more art activities as well as a leaf graphing activity this week.

Inside the classroom we have been exploring with leaves, apples, gourds, pinecones and other seeds, corn and pumpkins.

The children have loved tweezing corn from the cob. We have been using the corn kernels in our bird feeder. However, we have yet to see an actual bird take advantage of this food source. Instead we have been observing one very dark brown/black squirrel and a chipmunk sharing the bounty. The children have been making observations on the similarities and differences between the two animals.



They have noticed the difference in size and characteristics of their bodies (colors, tails, markings, etc.). They have also pointed out that they don't fight over the corn, they take turns eating it. The two animals also take the corn in different ways: the squirrel eats a few and then runs off with a few, digging little holes in the grass and burying the corn for later, while the chipmunk literally shoves as many kernels as he can into his cheeks and we have watched as the cheeks expand to accommodate tens of corn kernels. We have talked about where the chipmunk goes with its cheeks full of corn and the children have had great theories.



It's been a wonderful opportunity for them to watch wildlife in action right from the classroom window. If any of you have access to free corn we would greatly appreciate your donations, we would love to continue this activity as long as we can.

With apple picking season here we have done taste testing with several varieties of apples. Each day at line time the children were introduced to a new variety of apple: they were asked to touch, look, smell and then finally taste the apple each day. Then on Friday we tried all five varieties again, and then voted on our favorite and created a class graph. The choices for which apple they "liked best" were: McIntosh, Pink Lady, Granny Smith, Golden Delicious, Fuji, and

"Free choice is one of the highest of all the mental processes."

~ Dr. Maria Montessori

if they were undecided on a favorite, they could choose the category titled "I liked all of them equally." The winner with the most votes was "I liked all of them equally."

We talked about the math terms *least*, *most*, *same*, and *equally* and what each of these meant. We also defined *voting* and *graphing*. It was a really fun way to explore apples and the children loved trying a new variety each day.



We are using gourds in the practical life area as a scrubbing activity. The soapy water is great for the development and strengthening of hand muscles, helpful in preparation for writing. This activity is also a great opportunity for organization; the children need to set out all the items they will need in the order they will use them, and then after the activity they must replace and clean everything so it is ready for the next child.

We also started our pumpkin investigation last week. First we explored the outside: textures, bumps, lines, weight. Then we opened it up and explored the inside: textures, smell, etc. and we introduced *estimation* and had the children make a guesstimate as to how many seeds they think will be inside. We counted the seeds, cooked the seeds, and tasted test the seeds. Then we transformed the pumpkin into a classroom jack-o-lantern. We also talked about the parts of a pumpkin and the life cycle of a pumpkin.

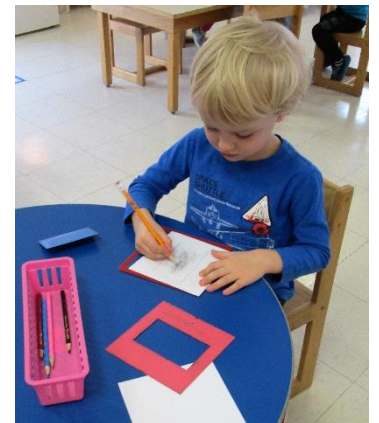


This is always an exciting time of year with so many learning opportunities provided directly from nature and our surrounding environment.



# September Photo Gallery

## South Room



# News from Pre-K Extended Day

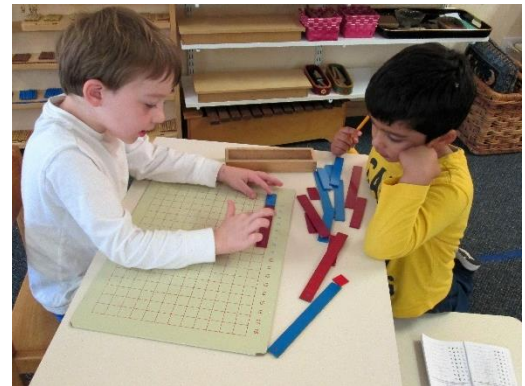
by Ms. Andrea



This group of afternoon children continues to progress in their afternoon work cycle. Now that they have gotten the swing of things and know what to expect from the afternoon schedule, they enter the classroom ready to choose their activities with growing independence and confidence.



As part of our ongoing effort in grace and courtesy and overall growing responsibilities to care for self/others/environment, the pre-kindergarteners help the school by taking care of the main hallway and closets.



Even if it is not their morning classroom, they have works in progress that they are able to continue from the previous day. This has also been a great opportunity for small group presentations on the many variations and extensions of the sensorial materials.



After they come in from the playground and exchange their shoes and hang up their coats, they help organize all the closets by straightening the shoes and hangers, as well as collecting any stray wood chips or rubber mulch that have landed on the hallway carpet.



They collect these in the very special "mulch bucket" and then when the bucket gets full, they return it to the playground. They take this cleaning task very seriously and are very proud to have this job to themselves.



# News from the East Room

## by Ms. Christine



Fall is a fun and busy time in our classroom; we are noticing changes both indoors and outdoors. Outside, leaves are changing colors and the wind is blowing them off the trees. We planted beautiful and colorful mums on the playground which we enjoy looking at every day. Inside, the children are growing in confidence with their daily routines.

One recent activity is the challenge of hanging up our coats. We practice zipper lessons daily - it might be a good time to check the zippers on coats as well as consider upcoming winter coats as well. It is so wonderful to hear "I did it!". (Some zippers are challenging!). Being able to self-dress is a confidence boost.

We take quite a bit of time to work on what we call "Grace and Courtesy" lessons in the classroom. These presentations build the foundation for the many ways in which we instill a sense of peace, order and safety while still maintaining a lively and active work environment. Your child is now able to choose a work, unroll their own rug, work with materials independently or with a friend, then put the material back on the shelf, and roll up and put away the rug. They know how to ask for help, walk around other people working without disturbing them, and be an active and respectful participant of a group and line time activities.



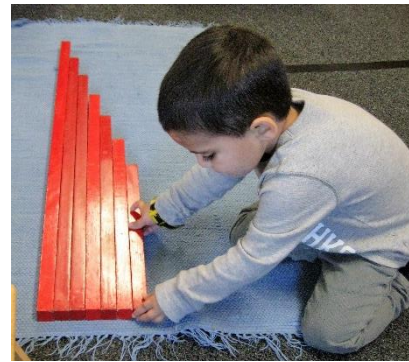
This month we have also reinforced good hygiene practices to limit the spreading of germs around our community; proper hand washing, how to sneeze and cough into your arm rather than your hands, how to blow your nose and then wash hands, not to put fingers/hands into the mouth, nose or underneath clothing. As we practice these things daily at school, we are hopeful that we can all stay healthy this school year!

In our wonderful multi-age classroom, this month the children all worked in different areas and with different materials; math, language, science, geography, sensorial, practical life and their own creative work.

"Education should no longer be mostly imparting knowledge, but must take a new path, seeking the release of human potentials."

~ Dr. Maria Montessori

The beauty of the Montessori environment allows each child to work at their own pace while observing other children exploring different hands-on activities all around.



Of course, the highlight of October is Halloween! The children are excited and having fun talking about their costumes, trick or treating and their favorite candy.....We have also been busy adding to our Halloween decor - Jack o Lanterns, ghosts, bats with glow in the dark eyes! Many are also working on a Halloween paper chain to hang up for our celebration on the 31st.

We have been working on The Life Cycle of a Pumpkin, Parts of a Bat and Parts of a Spider. We made pumpkin muffins for a delicious line time snack. We also enjoyed tasting Bosc, Anjou and Bartlett pears- yummy!



The children are enjoying their ownership of their classroom - we are seeing much progress already this school year and are looking forward to meeting with you during upcoming conferences.

Thank you so much for your continued Sharing Basket and volunteering for Halloween. We are looking forward to fun this month!

# September Photo Gallery

## East Room



# News from the Late Afternoon Class

By Ms. Donna



## GROUP ACTIVITIES:

Large Things and Small Things (cards were passed out to the children after talking about what would be large and what would be small. The children had to decide where their card should go)

Poem about Fall, "Leaves are Falling Down" (cards were passed out) when the word is said that is on your card you hold the card up in the air.

Poem about 5 Black Bats. Five children were chosen Bat #1, #2, #3, #4 and #5. As their Bat was mentioned they sat down. Then 5 more bats were chosen.

## ART:

Stenciled apples (red, green, yellow). Yarn wrapped apples. Traced large stencils and decorated (leaf, owl, acorn)

The Halloween Story (similar to "Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What do you see"? Old Witch, old witch what do you see? I see an orange pumpkin, black cat, brown owl, white ghost, green goblin, haunted house, trick or treaters looking at me.



## MUSIC:

Rhythm sticks: repeat patterns (each child led us in a pattern which the group would repeat back to the leader).

Punchinello song with actions. "It" stands in the middle of the circle and the group sings "what do you do Punchinello, Punchinello", the "IT" does an action and everyone sings "we can do it to". Then a new "IT" is chosen.

Bean Bag song where the bean bag is put on different body parts, arms, elbows, etc.



## GAME:

Knock, Knock "Trick or Treat". "IT" sits on a chair while the child knocking on the door says using a disguised voice says "Trick or Treat". If the "IT" guesses correctly the child that did the knocking becomes the new "IT".

Hide the Pumpkin: Someone hides the pumpkin while everyone watches but the "IT". Part of the pumpkin must be able to be seen. When the "IT" begins to look, the other children can only say hot or cold as the "IT" walks towards or away from the pumpkin.

Halloween Bingo



## FREE CHOICE:

Easel painting, sand, blocks, trains, shaving cream, cards (Go Fish)



## STORIES:

Flannel Board Story: "Five White Ghosts" While their mother went to the store to get milk and potatoes the 5 ghosts were told not to eat anything no matter how hungry they might get. But they did and they change colors. The children could retell the story using the 5 ghosts and different places they had hidden.

## OUTSIDE:

Soccer, baseball, playing pirates, painting with water, jumping rope and watering the flowers.

