



ALPINE MONTESSORI

"The mind is not a vessel to be filled, but a fire to be kindled"
— Plutarch

DATES TO REMEMBER

(Refer to this box every month for important dates to note on your calendar.)

8/31

Maria Montessori's 151st birthday!

9/6

Labor Day, school closed

Notes from 908

We would like to welcome all new and returning families to another exciting school year at Alpine Montessori. There are some excellent changes to note all around campus. In the primary classroom we are celebrating the expansion of our outdoor learning space. Many thanks to board president Bret Scott for his labor in planning and executing the construction of protective walls and a roof! While this area will still have ample air flow, the children, materials, and furniture won't be as vulnerable to the outside elements. We are thrilled to have static shade and papers that will stay put on a windy day! The elementary class has a boastful change as well. Welcome Elena Caballero, our new teacher's assistant! Elena is working toward her Montessori certification in both lower and upper elementary and has already completed the 6-9 portion of the training. She will gain valuable experience this year under the tutelage of lead teacher Amy Ellis. Ms Amy holds certifications in both Lower and Upper Elementary and is embarking on her 9th year as a teacher at our school. They make a great team! We are also thrilled to welcome back the highly regarded Adolescent Program this year. After a two year hiatus, the AP is back in action with six students enrolled. Joyce Downing has some pretty amazing plans for this group this year that incorporates the best of Montessori: educating the whole child. We are grateful that Nan Hatty Edwards will be on hand to assist Joyce with various tasks throughout the year. Read more about their pursuits, along with the other classes, on the inside pages of this newsletter every month.

We are so proud of how the school is shaping up this year. Countless thanks goes to all the folks who helped us along the way before our first day of school. Please look for the "Thank you!" section of the newsletter in the following pages. Most of all, we want to thank you all for entrusting us with your children. We care for them deeply and take our job very seriously. Please don't ever hesitate to ask questions and voice your concerns. We are here for you!



From the Elementary

The big classroom has gotten even bigger this year with new faces all around. We have new students in every grade and a new teacher! Elena Caballero has joined the class as Ms. Amy's assistant as she continues her studies toward Montessori certification through Montessori Canela Internacional in Barcelona. She admires how the Montessori philosophy can be found in everything that surrounds us, inside and outside of the classroom. She enjoys reading books on emotional education and educational neuroscience and she looks forward to sharing what she has learned thus far in her training on, as she puts it, "this beautiful path of the cosmic education". Welcome aboard, Elena!



Ms. Amy wasted no time immersing the children in the foundational work found in Montessori elementary classes worldwide known as The Great Lessons. A favorite presentation for both educators and students alike, the children love the first lesson explaining the Big Bang, part of the cosmic curriculum to teach about the earth and our relationship to the universe. Students have also been delving into the atomic structure, and the somewhat more mundane subject of daily classroom jobs. It's a bustling scene of happy faces and lots of AHA! moments, and we delight in it all.

The Primary Side

Pardon our mess! We are in the middle of trying to weatherize our back porch in order to make more room for the classroom to work outdoors while being protected from the elements. Once completed, the space will be bright and shady with lots of air flow but without as much rain and sun to prevent us from spending time out there. We also hope this allows for more outdoor classroom time in the colder months! Once the structure is completed we will have a parent workday to help get it painted. Look for an email to go out about this volunteer opportunity.



The children have spent the first two weeks getting to know the teachers, the classroom, and each other. We are already beginning to see evidence of "normalization", a Montessori term that refers to a stage in the new school year when classroom flow is achieved. Students know the environment, are familiar with the lessons on the shelves, and understand the expectations in the classroom. Maria Montessori said "The greatest sign of success for a teacher... is to be able to say, "The children are now working as if I did not exist." We aren't quite there yet, but by October we'll have a buzzing, normalized primary class!

Around the AP



The adolescent program started off the year with “Week Zero”, which is something of a misnomer. Week Zero actually consists of TWO weeks and despite the numerical placement the days encompassed in this mini-term the lessons are anything but zilch. Week Zero is a time to learn and help construct the flow of the program. Students are involved with organizing their academic binders, making classroom rules, advising the daily schedule, and participating in team-building activities. They also dive right into academics because we haven’t a minute to waste in preparing the children for the challenging work in literature, math, sciences, and history that 7th and 8th grade brings. Students begin their day journaling before they embark on light exercise, then they work in their group on morning lessons and work individually in the afternoon. Friday class time will be held in Marfa where the students will learn woodworking and begin creating their business model, a key component to the Montessori adolescent curriculum. We can’t wait to report on everything this dynamic program will undertake this year and for many years to come!

WE THANK YOU!

We get by with a LOT of help from our friends. We would like to thank the following people and businesses for their contributions to our school.

Dave Larson, Jim Thompson, and Kevin Urbanczyk... *for taking down five dead trees on campus!* **Bret Scott...** *for enclosing the primary porch for more protection in the outdoor environment!* **Larry Bamburg and Kyle Melgaard...** *for all their work on the Adolescent Classroom on the Marfa campus.* **Faith Melgaard...** *for rebuilding and resurfacing the cover for the sandbox!* **Erin and Jeff Williams...** *for covering the tables and tidying up around the grounds, and for donating much needed supplies and furniture to the school!* **Liz Sibley...** *where to begin? Too many tasks to list, but suffice it to say Liz is our forever guardian angel!* **Rachel Sibley...** *for offering up her painting and organizational skills to the primary classroom!* **Chris Sibley and Tee Smart...** *for helping out where needed during inservice week!* **Hunter Edwards...** *for donation of the BIG clock in the office!* **Liz and Hiram Sibley...** *for the generous donation of countless items and help getting it all in place.* **Andrew Jones...** *for lots of help with removing debris and putting together a podium with a gajillion pieces!* **Joe Grajeda,** *for clearing out the garden (whew!) and being our go-to handyman all week!* **Tony Curry** *for always answering our plumbing woe calls!* **Paedric Rayburn** *for replacing the wooden swings on the playground!* **Ivan Santos** *for showing up to “do anything”. We put him right to work. :)* **Raphael Woodward...** *for generously donating to the school through our Amazon wishlist!* **Jessica and Frank Bassham...** *for their donation of yoga mats to the adolescent program!* **TransPecos Banks...** *for donating school supplies of our choice!* **Our Board Members...** *a thousand thank-yous for helping us through the storm. Gracias por todo.*

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Please
remember to turn off your
vehicle when parked at the school.
Idling cars pose hazards to our
small pedestrians and the
environment!



Montessori at Home

We like to share Montessori methods we use here at the school with parents that you may also include in your life at home. Our returning families may recognize this list from previous years, but we think it bears repeating every September. Our little big minds can do more than we think they can, and we should let them!

Ages 2-3

Put toys in toy box
Stack books on shelf
Place dirty clothes in laundry hamper
Throw trash away
Carry firewood
Fold washcloths
Set the table
Fetch diapers & wipes
Dust baseboards

Ages 4-5

Feed pets
Wipe up spills
Put away toys
Make the bed
Straighten bedroom
Water houseplants
Sort clean silverware
Prepare simple snacks
Use hand-held vacuum
Clear kitchen table
Dry and put away dishes
Disinfect doorknob

Ages 6-7

Gather trash
Fold towels
Dust mop floors
Empty dishwasher
Match clean socks
Weed garden
Rake leaves
Peel potatoes or carrots
Make salad
Replace toilet paper roll

Ages 8-9

Load dishwasher
Change light bulbs
Wash laundry
Hang/fold clean clothes
Dust furniture
Spray off patio
Put groceries away
Scramble eggs
Bake cookies
Walk dogs
Sweep porches
Wipe off table

Ages 10-11

Clean bathrooms
Vacuum rugs
Clean countertops
Deep clean kitchen
Prepare simple meal
Mow lawn
Bring in mail
Do simple mending (hems, buttons, etc.)
Sweep out garage

Ages 12 and up

Mop floors
Change overhead lights
Wash/vacuum car
Trim hedges
Paint walls
Shop for groceries w/list
Cook complete dinner
Bake bread or cake
Do simple home repairs
Wash windows
Iron clothes
Watch younger siblings