



ALPINE MONTESSORI

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

DATES TO REMEMBER

3/7-3/15

Spring break,
school closed

Looking ahead...

4/15

School closed

4/4

Parent/Teacher
conferences begin in
primary class

4/11 - 4/14

Iowa Test of Basic
Skills - Elementary
and AP

4/18

Elementary Parent/
Teacher conferences
begin



Notes from 908

When the calendar rolls over to March, we know that as far as academics go, we are in the home stretch. The kindergarten students begin visiting the elementary class more frequently to get a feel for what the future holds in first grade. The elementary and adolescent students come back from spring break with the last hurrah behind them before we settle into the remainder of the school year. The teachers check their notes, double-check their lists, and make sure everyone is on track to finish out the school year strong. The best part about March, though, is the return of spring weather: the brightness of new green leaves, hearing the birds return to the neighborhood, less frigid mornings. We're all a little more chipper in March.

It looks like our extended outdoor classroom is ready for the finishing touches! Many Montessori schools embrace what is referred to as the "outdoor environment", where they can work in and receive benefits from the fresh air. It's also a place where the students can find freedom with messier projects. We are gearing up to have a parent workday soon to paint the addition, inside and out, with other playground projects on the list as well. Please look for more information soon in your family box regarding dates and times of our workday!

As some of you may know, we are currently looking for a lead primary teacher for the 2022-23 school year. We do require Montessori certification of all of our lead teachers but we are willing to assist in this process for the right candidate with a

passion for children and the Montessori method. If you know someone who may be interested in applying for this position, please direct them to send a resumé and cover letter to admin@alpinemontessori.org



From the Elementary

We had another LOVEly Valentine's Day tea this year with special cards, beautiful sentiments, and delicious tea for the children to share together with their teachers. Maria Montessori said "Of all things, love is the most potent". We were so happy to watch the children take a little time out of their busy day of learning to focus on appreciation of one another. They certainly appreciated the treats from room parents Erin and Jeff Williams, too!



This month the 1st and 2nd graders will begin learning about money values and how these parallel with fractions. Montessori students begin working with math materials that explain fractions since their early primary years, so it is important to further their understanding through advanced application. The other elementary students are also exploring fractions this month.

Sixth graders will begin discussion and planning of their big end-of-the-year project that will be presented during the last week of school. The students may choose any subject that is of great interest to them and then research it until they can relay it with mastery to their peers while exhibiting an accompanying project. Past projects have run the gamut, from the Golden Ratio to Disability Rights, Gene Editing (Crispr) to the Mars Rover. We always look forward to these presentations every year and the students feel a great sense of pride in their mastery of the chosen topic.

The Primary Side

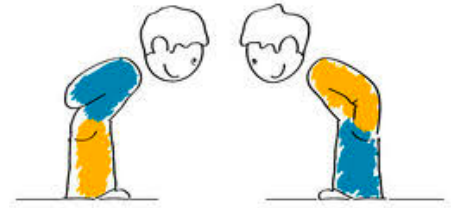
The Grace and Courtesy lessons in February were so interesting for the primary students. We wouldn't be surprised if parents are seeing some of these behaviors playing out at home! Students learned about respecting work space and tidying up, as well as how to roll a rug and properly carry a chair. These type of basic considerations for the classroom community go a long way in creating and maintaining harmony among the students, while also have a calming effect in the environment.



This month the children are learning about Africa. Geography lessons are a huge component to the Montessori curriculum and so important for a child's understanding of the global community. Map puzzles serve to introduce to the children the different countries within a continent and give them a chance to make their own colorful map... also great for practicing fine motor skills through tracing and writing. Once a Montessori student transitions to a traditional school setting, they are often way ahead of their peers in many subjects; this is especially true with geography. Parents can expand upon this by exploring maps with their children at home!

Grace and Courtesy

February was Grace and Courtesy month at Alpine Montessori. All classes were given lessons from many different staff members, not just their own teachers. Ms. Nan Hatty spoke with the students about “restoring the environment” and made a fun hands-on activity to remind the children to check their surroundings for things out of place. Ms. Amelie read from George Washington’s boyhood composition “Rules of Civility”, an amusing account of Victorian behavioral expectations, with some gems that hold true today. Ms. Rachel and Ms. Addie spoke with the primary class about classroom etiquette, such as walking around someone’s work rug, not running in the classroom, and the proper use of materials. Ms. Betsy had a delightful discussion about respecting the community and conflict resolution, and she shared delightful stories from her past. Ms. Amy led a lively discussion about the meaning and practical applications of the word “respect”. Finishing off the month of lessons, Ms. Irene asked the children “what is gossip?”, and talked about the far reaching implications of spreading news for entertainment. Many thanks go to Ms. Betsy who began the discussion among the staff of the importance of revisiting the Grace and Courtesy curriculum, taught in every Montessori school worldwide. We all learned so much!



Around the AP

The current cycle in the adolescent class is themed “Systems”. The Montessori method traditionally begins with the big picture, a macro view, and then lessons work their way to the micro view, or what is going on in the community around us. The initial discussion of government systems and trade eventually has the students learning about budgeting and the still-relevant activity of writing checks! In one particular lesson, each child was randomly assigned a career which dictated their probable income. From there, much like Monopoly, they drew cards every day for a week which gave them pluses and minuses depending on the noted event. Unplanned visits to the dentist, for example, might necessitate some budget juggling, while finding five dollars on the sidewalk could serve as an unexpected boon. Other systems explored are systems of government, systems of trade, and the biological system of classification.



This month the students are preparing for their Texas History tour at the end of March. To that end, Dr. Mark Saka from Sul Ross State University will visit the classroom and give a talk on the battle of the Alamo and the myths that have easily proliferated since. They will then travel to Austin on March 28th for three days to visit the LBJ Presidential Library, take in the Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center, tour the Texas capitol building, watch a bat flight, and explore the Sauer-Beckmann Living History Farm. They also hope to indulge in some local pizza and ice-cream! We owe a great thank-you to the Sibley family for hosting the class in a vacation rental in beautiful south Austin. It’s a wonderful opportunity at a great time of year to be in the Texas capitol city.

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.

Amber and Justin Smith, *for bringing donuts to the staff... TWICE in February!*

Erin and Jeff Williams, *for the beautiful electric teapots donated to the elementary class!*

Bret Scott, *for the many weekends donated to constructing the outdoor classroom for the Primary!*

Primary parents, *to all of you who brought special treats for the Valentine's Day party!*

Kelly and Andrew Jones, *for also coming through with donuts for the staff!*



An adolescent student engages in some puppeteering with two pre-schoolers in after-school care.