



# ALPINE MONTESSORI

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

## Notes from 908

### DATES TO REMEMBER

2/14

Valentine's Day,  
parties in all  
classrooms

2/16

Student noon  
release/staff  
professional  
development pm

2/19

School closed,  
President's Day



Perhaps it is appropriate that Valentine's Day falls in February, when the gifting season is receding in the rearview mirror, yet we try to think more creatively about how to show love and care to our friends. Even though some may view Valentine's Day as contrived and phony, here at the school we believe in giving space on this day for children to express to their friends and teachers



"I'm glad you're here, and that you're a part of my life." After all, do not the very young almost always have something to teach us all about how to live in the moment and express authentic joy? Maria Montessori famously said "Of all things, love is the most potent." We certainly agree with her! This is a wonderful time to apply all that the children learn in the "grace and courtesy" sphere. There will be parties in all of the classrooms on Wednesday, February 14th. More information will be coming soon on party plans and how you as parents can help. Thank you!

Also of note, there will be an early release on Friday, February 16th and the school will be closed on Monday, February 19th in observation of President's Day.

## The Primary Side

Students in the primary returned to the Children’s House (Maria Montessori’s name for the ages 3-6 classroom) refreshed and ready for a reset, which is always a delight to see! Ms. Betsy often touts “normalization through work” and this adage certainly holds true with our youngest students. The classroom was refreshed upon our return to school as well, which is always by design. A prepared environment, thoughtfully designed by the guide, is meant to call to the child, inspiring cognitive growth in a range of areas. Independence is always a theme, but has been of special focus lately. The teachers returned from their trip to observe at Austin Montessori full of great ideas! Observation of other professionals in the field is a wonderful way to keep a teacher’s “cup” brimful with inspiration and support, and we were so happy to have had the opportunity. Many thanks to our friends at Austin Montessori for the beauty we found there! There will be a party to celebrate Valentine’s day on Wednesday, February 14th. Children are invited to exchange cards with their classmates, which can be purchased or handmade. There are 22 students total in the primary classroom. Happy February!



*The lower el raised \$70 in ornament sales on the night of our holiday program, which they donated to the Alpine Humane Society!*

## From the Elementary



Hanging a crisp new calendar on the wall in January always brings that sense of a fresh start, but also the awareness that the academic year is halfway over! Time to crack on! The students in the elementary are always glad to see one another after the long winter break, their age is one of great social need as you may have noticed! Ms. Eliza and Ms. Mollie were among the staff who observed at Austin Montessori recently, and they too returned home with a renewed sense of wonder at what it means to be a Montessori guide. We are so proud that Alpine can boast of a Montessori school in this remote part of the world, but inspiration from other professionals in the field is medicinal for our teachers and we are delighted

they had the opportunity to see their craft with fresh eyes. Of study lately in lower elementary are maps and research, cursive handwriting, character and setting study within works of fiction, and pen pal letters to students of Fort Davis ISD! In upper el, the students have been working on cell research with corresponding models, multiplying fractions, the thirteen colonies, drawing floor plans of historic missions, and grammarizing sentences. There are plans on the horizon for field trips this winter and spring, so please let us know if you would like to be a parent volunteer on one of these trips! There will be Valentine's day parties in both elementary classrooms on Wednesday, February 14th. Students may bring purchased or handmade cards for their classmates (and teachers too, if desired). More information soon on that subject from your child's teacher. Happy Valentine's day Everyone!



*thank  
you*

*We get by with a LOT of help from our friends. Many thanks go to the folks who contributed time, energy, and/or funds to the school last month!*

*Coral Jensen, for donating a projector to the school!*

*Chris Weber, for giving the playground swings a refresh!*

*Kelly Jones, for helping prepare pancakes and sausage for the elementary pancakes and pajamas party!*

*Taylor Bruecher, for providing special provisions for the primary holiday party!*

*Austin Montessori, for hosting the teachers for a day of observations in their primary and elementary classrooms!*

*Chris and Tee Sibley, for housing the teachers on their trip to Austin in January!*

*All of our friends who purchased crocheted ornaments on the night of our holiday program!*

## Montessori at home

Have you ever wondered why your child seems quite capable of performing tasks at school and shows reluctance to execute those same tasks at home? While the teacher/student relationship is worlds apart from the parent/child relationship, there are so many things that you can do to facilitate your child's independence and give them the gift of self-reliance! A good rule of thumb? Start early! Your child will thank you some day! Read on for a few ideas on how to build the bridge from school to home...

- ❖ Even though it requires a bit of extra patience, allow your child to hang up his own coat and bag at home. A low hook that is within his reach will set the standard as he gets older. Although it seems simplistic, take the time to point out the loop on his jacket lining and teach him how to separate it with thumb and forefinger and place it on the hook. You won't have to do this many times, and you'll be amazed at the effectiveness of slow methodical instruction, free from pressure or impatience.
- ❖ If your space allows, a child-sized table in the kitchen can be a wonderful way to include your child and allow her to be near you (because that's where she wants to be!) yet have her own space for any activity she may want to do while you perform your kitchen duties. A stool in the kitchen is also a must for those moments when you can bring your helper in. Although messes are inevitable, it's so much better to start early rather than restrict involvement and wonder why your teenager has no idea how to wash a dish or sweep the floor!
- ❖ Try to enjoy the wonder of the natural world with your child. Remember that they are experiencing the heady sensations of being alive for the first time, and it's all fresh and amazing! We could all benefit from taking the time to give those simple pleasures their due appreciation! Try naming sensations with your little ones, that will help them to learn about their senses. All of their early experiences add up to bring them to self-awareness, which is the perfect jumping off point for continued growth and a love of learning!
- ❖ Sometimes good intentions get in the way, and we forget to ask questions rather than make statements. It's a great feeling to watch a child arrive at the right answer on their own by paving the way with questions instead of answers. So powerful for building confidence!



### *Upper elementary students handcrafted models to pair with their research on the parts of an animal cell.*

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