The End of the Year

The April/May issue of *Tiger Tales* marks the end of the academic school year! As we prepare for the final quarter of Montessori excellence, we are excited to announce some of our annual year-end traditions. This month is our Family Day, a day for our TMA/TR families to come and enjoy fun games, food, and a movie in our gym. April is also our month for Terra Nova testing. More information on these events, along with many more, in this month’s issue. Enjoy!

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NEW SECTION: Montessori Insight.

Find us on:
Focus on the Faculty: Mrs. Lois Phillips

This month’s Focus on the Faculty highlights Mrs. Lois Phillips. Mrs. Phillips is our Director of Admissions at TMA/TR, as well as one of the founding owners of our Academy. Mrs. Phillips is passionate about Montessori and has devoted her tenure in education to exploring and highlighting the works of Dr. Maria Montessori and instilling a level of excellence in our classrooms. Mrs. Phillips is involved in many Montessori accreditation associations, and regulates our classrooms to meet and exceed the standards of Montessori education.

Alumni Highlight: Alexandra Peralta

Our Alumni Highlight for this month focuses on Alexandra Peralta. Alex is sister to Victoria Peralta, another member of our esteemed Alumni Group at TMA/TR. Alex was a part of TMA since the age of three, and graduated with the 8th Grade class of 2009. Upon leaving TMA, Alex went on to Lake Mary Preparatory School for high school. Alex is currently in the midst of her freshman year at Wake Forest University, where she plans on studying Pre-Medical Sciences. We wish Alex the best as she continues on the path of excellence.
Family Fun Day

A day of fun for all of our TMA families and friends!
We are excited to bring back a day of great games, food, and a movie in our gym!

When? Saturday, April 26th, starting at 2PM
Where? TMA Main Campus
Who? All TMA/TR families and friends!
Cost? Attendance is free! Food will be sold by Martha’s Angels and all proceeds from food sales will directly benefit their breast cancer foundation.

RSVP on the TMA Website home page!
Tuskawilla Montessori Academy

TMA Happenings

April 1st-4th: Terra Nova Testing for K-8th Grade Students
April 8th: Lower Elementary Field Trip-Birds of Prey (Elm)
April 9th: Lower Elementary Field Trip: Birds of Prey (Magnolia)
April 9th: Parent Education Night @ Main Campus
April 11th: Upper Elementary Field Trip-Siemens Wind Facility
April 18th: Good Friday-School Closed (No childcare)
April 26th: Family Day, starting at 2PM

For the latest events and information, please visit our website at www.tuskmont.org.

Famous Faces in Montessori

Jimmy Wales
Founder-Wikipedia

Jimmy Wales is the founder of the famous online research tool, Wikipedia. He has attended the University of Alabama and Indiana University, where he received a PhD in finance. He taught at several universities throughout the nation before starting Wikipedia and web-hosting company, Wikia.

School Closed-April 18th

TMA/TR will be closed on Friday, April 18th in observance of the Good Friday holiday. There will be no childcare available.

Montessori Conference-Dallas, Texas

This year, TMA/TR was represented at the annual AMS Conference in Dallas, Texas! Mrs. Huff and Mrs. Marzullo, along with members of our Administration, flew over to Dallas to capture the latest and greatest in Montessori at this year’s AMS Conference. In between conference sessions, our teachers visited the iconic Grassy Knoll site, and took a tour of the museum that honored the life of President John F. Kennedy. We wanted to thank all of our parents for participating in our fundraising events this year. It was these valiant efforts that helped us send our teachers to refresh and learn new concepts and lessons to bring to our classrooms.
Parent Night
Wednesday, April 9th
Starting at 6:30PM

Join us for an evening of Montessori discovery! Parent Night is an excellent opportunity for parents to learn more about Montessori, the transition points in the program, the benefits of a Montessori education, and more.

Schedule:
6:30PM: Preschool/Kindergarten
7:00PM: Lower Elementary
7:30PM: Upper Elementary
7:30PM: Middle School

Cost: **FREE**
Childcare: **FREE** childcare is included in the evening.
We will have pizza and beverages for all kids in childcare for the evening.

RSVP Online by visiting the homepage link titled “Parent Night RSVP”

This event is open to both current and prospective families

Main Campus
HAVE YOU REGISTERED FOR 2014-2015 YET?

Download the Registration Form on our website by visiting the Enrollment section of our website:

http://www.tuskmont.org/enrollment.html
Swim Team

Spring Swim Team season is just around the corner. An email has gone out with information on try out dates and practice times. If you have any questions, please email Coach Rapp at RRapp@tuskmont.org

Parent Night

Join us for our annual Parent Night on Wednesday, April 9th. Parent Night will host several workshops on Montessori, including Homework, Traditional vs. Montessori, and more. Free childcare, including pizza and drinks, will be provided to all families that attend! RSVP online at www.tuskmont.org

Healthy Foods

Many parents have emailed us in regards to healthier foods in our classrooms and on campus. TMA strives to promote an environment where learning takes place in and out of the classrooms, including what our students consume while on campus. Keeping this in mind, we ask that you seek healthy alternatives when bringing in a special snack for your child’s classroom, celebrating a birthday, etc. Check out this weblink for ideas on healthy snacks: http://spoonfedblog.net/

Yearbook Orders

It’s that time of year! The yearbook is well underway and we are excited to show you this year’s book of memories and fun. One of the greatest parts of our yearbook is the personal pages and advertisements from parents to students! Interested? Email Mrs. Garner at SGarner@cfl.rr.com for more information.

Historical Society Winners

Congratulations to Taylor Brown and Anshumi Jhaveri for winning First Place and Runner Up Awards, respectively, for the Oviedo Historical Society.
Montessori education offers our children opportunities to develop their potential as they step out into the world as engaged, competent, responsible, and respectful citizens with an understanding and appreciation that learning is for life.

- **Each child is valued as a unique individual.** Montessori education recognizes that children learn in different ways, and accommodates all learning styles. Students are also free to learn at their own pace, each advancing through the curriculum as he is ready, guided by the teacher and an individualized learning plan.

- **Beginning at an early age, Montessori students develop order, coordination, concentration, and independence.** Classroom design, materials, and daily routines support the individual’s emerging “self-regulation” (ability to educate one’s self, and to think about what one is learning), toddlers through adolescents.

- **Students are part of a close, caring community.** The multi-age classroom—typically spanning 3 years—re-creates a family structure. Older students enjoy stature as mentors and role models; younger children feel supported and gain confidence about the challenges ahead. Teachers model respect, loving kindness, and a belief in peaceful conflict resolution.

- **Montessori students enjoy freedom within limits.** Working within parameters set by their teachers, students are active participants in deciding what their focus of learning will be. Montessorians understand that internal satisfaction drives the child’s curiosity and interest and results in joyous learning that is sustainable over a lifetime.

- **Students are supported in becoming active seekers of knowledge.** Teachers provide environments where students have the freedom and the tools to pursue answers to their own questions.

- **Self-correction and self-assessment are an integral part of the Montessori classroom approach.** As they mature, students learn to look critically at their work, and become adept at recognizing, correcting, and learning from their error.

The traditional approach to disciplining children at school is based on the ideas of restriction and control. Rules and boundaries are set to influence proper conduct. Children are confined to assigned seats to create a sense of order. Socializing in the classroom is kept to a bare minimum to suppress unruly behavior.

Realistically, how effective can this style of discipline be on growing children? Young children learn about the world by exploring their environment, and they learn the art of language by engaging in conversation with their peers. Setting strict and unnatural boundaries can interfere with a child’s development and have an adverse effect on their behavior.

Maria Montessori grasped the idea of discipline being acquired through freedom. As she put it,

In our system we obviously have a different concept of discipline. The discipline that we are looking for is active. We do not believe that one is disciplined only when he is artificially made as silent as a mute and as motionless as a paralytic. Such a one is not disciplined but annihilated.

The freedom to move, speak, and choose freely in the classroom plays a critical role in strengthening a child's inner discipline. Self-discipline is not acquired through verbal commands and lecturing. These techniques usually fail and encourage obstinate behavior. Instead, discipline is acquired indirectly by one's engagement with work. Once a child is drawn into work great changes occur. Calmness and contentment prevail while a child is working. The child becomes focused and aware of the self-control needed to complete his work.

A certain amount of freedom is necessary for this process to occur. A child cannot be forced to learn a lesson that his body and mind are not ready for. A child engages himself in work that calls to him. As Maria Montessori put it: children "enrich their personalities by freely choosing their own occupations and . . . disciplin[ing] themselves." This freedom should not be denied unless a child mishandles the material or engages in improper behavior.

The Montessori method also encourages freedom of movement. Movement in a classroom traditionally has been viewed as disruptive. This is certainly true in a traditional classroom where children are required to stay seated at hard wooden desks! Movement, however, is a very natural calling to a developing child. A child is bound to trip, fall, and move clumsily. Movement is a skill that needs to be practiced and conditioned. Montessori encourages the freedom to practice movement. Exercises in motion promote coordination and self-control. A child furthers his development in discipline by teaching himself to control his own body.

The freedom to mingle and observe other classmates is also practiced in a Montessori classroom. The experience of children socializing with each other is a great teacher of what is acceptable conduct. Montessori students learn quickly that screaming, playing, and defiant behavior are inappropriate. They also engage in exercises that teach them that silence can be enjoyable and that it encourages concentration. They become more aware of their own need for silence and peacefulness, and they gradually amend their behavior.

Inner discipline is a learned behavior that must be acquired through experience. Children need the freedom to explore because they can't develop through commands alone. Suppressing a child's inner calling will only lead to more defiant behavior.

The Montessori method does not dismiss bad behavior, but directs this unbridled behavior into lessons. Work is a great director of discipline. Work establishes self-control. The self-control and inner peace the children learn in the classroom give an order to their entire being.

By: Mrs. Miller, Primary II Teacher
Montessori's definition of freedom (liberty)

Very often people think of freedom as “doing what we like” which is not the case with authentic Montessori education. One day, a lady visited Dr. Montessori's school. She thought that in the school the children did what they liked as the school was known for its freedom. A little boy gracefully told her that "it is not that we do as we like, but we like what we do." This is a vivid example of what real freedom is.

Children learn best in an atmosphere that combines freedom with self-discipline. True freedom cannot exist without self-discipline and the development of skills for independent thought and action. Freedom in the Montessori classroom means free to do what is right. The child and the teacher work together in a prepared environment to build a community. The child learns to respect the rules. Choice is given for the child to choose his own activity. The outcome of this freedom is self-discipline, concentration individuality and social interaction.

“The child does not perform a task because it gives him/her pleasure but he/she finds pleasure in the task he/she decides to do.” The task has become such a joy to the child that he/she almost forgets about him/herself even material rewards have no influence on him/her. EM Standing in Montessori, her Life, her Work, elaborates on this idea by saying that it is not just thinking and/or doing what we like that makes us free but thinking and/or doing what is true. As Goethe wrote: "The invaluable happiness of liberty consisted not in doing what one pleases and what circumstances invite you to, but in being able, without hindrance or restraint, to do in the direct way what was right and proper”.

Three weeks ago, during a teaching practice visit, I observed a 4-year-old girl choose a binomial cube. She carefully brought it to her table. She tried several times to put it back together without any frustration. She was absorbed in self-discipline and gave a big smile when she completed her task. The Montessori environment allows freedom and discipline to work in harmony. The child who has this kind of freedom no longer relies on external incentives but can choose freely how to behave and what to do or what not to do. Not only does the child can choose freely but also he/she obeys the internal guide to "follow the long and narrow path toward perfection" This child has now become "master of his own home".
PTA Update

The PTA has been having a fabulous event-filled year. The most recent PTA-sponsored dance held in February was a true success with an overwhelming turnout and fun had by all. Thank you to all of the fabulous volunteers who put on this event.

While the end of the school year is getting closer, the PTA still has a lot going on:

At the end of Terra Nova Testing on April 4th the PTA will provide a treat for all the students at both campuses who participated.

To celebrate our wonderful TMA/TR teachers during Teacher Appreciation Week in May, the PTA is taking them out for a teacher-only dinner celebration. Stay tuned for information from the PTA about ways that you can each individually celebrate our amazing teachers this year.

Immediately following the Graduation Ceremony at Trinity Prep on May 19th, the PTA will host a reception to congratulate our graduates. All graduates, their families, teachers, members of the band playing at the event and their families are welcome to join us for juice and cookies on the lawn at Trinity Prep.

We have two more Dress Up Dress Down days in this school year. If you paid ahead, let your kids dress up or down on April 2nd and on May 7th. If you haven’t paid yet, you still can. Send money with your children on the Dress Up Dress Down days so that they can participate.

Thank you so much for the energy that all of you, the wonderful TMA/TR parents and teachers, bring to the PTA events. We couldn’t do them without you!
A message from your TMA/TR Faculty and Staff

Wow! The year is coming to an end, already? We have enjoyed another amazing year in Montessori and we are so proud of all of our students and their amazing progress. As the time comes to enter the summer vacation, we invite you to join us for a BRAND NEW SUMMER CAMP!

Our Tiger Cub and Tiger Camps will feature invited guests, new field trips, performances, arts and crafts, and more. Themes include chess, science, art, dance and theatre, sports, and more! We will also be offering Academic Intensive Camp throughout the summer, which will allow students to practice academic skills throughout the summer vacation, as well work on areas in their studies that may need reinforcement. The Academic Intensive Camp can be planned around our theme camps and campers can enjoy both areas of the camp with ease.

NEW THIS SUMMER-The Odyssey of the Mind Magic Center Region will be inviting students from the region to come to TMA for this summer’s Odyssey of the Mind Camp week! If you are interested in your child joining OoTM for the upcoming school year, please be sure to check out this great summer camp!

As always, we thank all of you for another great year!