

# WMS December 08 Newsletter



## *The Power of Elementary Child's Mind*

*by Gary Goodwin, Head of School*



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Never again does the human intellect reach this power and persistence. During the years from 6 - 12, the child is at the most intellectually hungry, adept, and fascicle of his or her life. What better time then to offer the child the world of invention, academics, scientific discovery, personal heroes and intellectual and artistic expression.

The best approach is not to do this directly by teaching. It takes instead a well versed appreciation for the child's potential for continuing social and emotional development. It also takes an appreciation of his imagination, an integral tool of the developing intellect. If we employ the child's imagination we can give him the keys to make his own discoveries and discovery engages the child emotionally and socially.

Discovery helps the child retain what he learns far better than if he is directly taught. History holds many keys for discovery and becomes accessible by exciting the child's imagination. First, in one of *Great Stories*, he is fascinated with how the earth came to be, how after a long, long time many creatures lived and died and their bodies and the trees and

plants that lived and died, with those bodies, provided the earth with the possibility of man's life on earth. Then, reflecting on what happened, an appreciation grows for everything that made his life possible. These seeds placed in the imagination sprout, and in good time, the child is able to make them the content of his own self-proclaimed interest and learning. Direct teaching is not able to carry the same weight for the child or add the same impact.

We can offer materialized-abstractions to be manipulated by the hand, which is the most direct pathway to the child's mind. Such material can help solidify concepts such as "similar", "congruent" and "equivalent", that are still nascent and not fully absorbed by the young mind. We can and should do this because the elementary aged child is still connected to his earlier years by his need to explore the physical world. But the important point is to know that he is now also connected to a new level of development. This age is one that requires his mind to work consciously, to reason and to understand.

"Understanding" - this is a new venture, one that is reached by exploring the world of words, simple and complex sentences, ideas of others, and by writing down his own thoughts. Ready now to take on this new kind of challenge and discovery, this child does not want simple ideas or simple tasks. A hard walk in a cold wind is information to the child that "I can do

The Primary years of 3 to 6 have laid the groundwork for this enormous intellectual readiness by exploring and naming the physical attributes of the environment. No longer content to know "what" with respect to the environment as in those years, he now needs to know "why" to complete his hidden drive to understand the world around him.

The Elementary class is not the singular world of development it is in the Primary years. In the Elementary years the child needs the help of others to complete his knowledge, and so working collaboratively is a very strong drive. By working together they develop understandings about the content of their study and about each other.

These children experience social complexities; understanding them often occurs through attempts and missteps, trial and error. Together these experiences form the ethical realm of social "right and wrong" which the elementary child tries to understand and to conquer. This work continues every day and with every contact the child makes among his classmates. An academic task taken on by a small group of friends provides a learning milieu. It defines a holistic learning environment where exploration of the social world goes hand in hand with academic work and his developing abilities for reasoning. On one plane, the complexities of a formula for finding the area of a triangle present no larger hurdle than the complexities of knowing how to "get along". Both are

important, and both present challenge to the child that is as stimulating as it is difficult. Both are strong indicators again of child's intellectual ability at this age.

If we didn't trust the child with managing these challenges for himself we would be like robbers in the night, taking from the child the dignity that is his. This is why we think Montessori education at the Elementary level offers children a link to the most important tasks of childhood. In doing so it helps

children contact an authentic sense of themselves and what they can do. It does not compare children and establish false categories among them which in reality are unimportant. Elementary Montessori brings out in children the best of their powers to analyze, to process and to perform, each to their own abilities, while establishing the source of their own dignity and self-esteem. This is why from the earliest moments of life we can confidently say that our strongest educational value is one that follows the child's famous wish: "Help me to do it myself".





Adaptation is the capacity of the child to incarnate from the environment, taking what he needs, and making it a part of him. This explains why a child is so comfortable in his environment.

Maria Montessori said "What is meant by this "making of an adaptation?" We take it to mean a

transformation of one's self of such a kind as to make one suited to one's surroundings, which then become a part of one's being." Maria Montessori shows us that the process of adaptation is the resulting process that is the consequence of self construction through the incarnation of the environment by the child. This process is assisted by both the absorbent mind and *horme*. The absorbent mind remember, is the special power of children under 6. *Horme* is the inner guide of the child. These two allow adaptation by causing a love of the environment. It is this love and connection to the environment that allows adaptation.

In order to adapt a child must go through a three step process of being becoming and belonging. At birth the child is being, then, as he goes through the process of self construction he is becoming the person he is meant to become. Finally, through incarnation of the environment and the process of self construction, the child adapts to his environment and finds a solid sense of belonging.

The process of adaptation begins in utero. For example, flavors or tastes are passed through amniotic fluid, the child hears the sounds of his parent's voices, and he feels the rythms of his mother's movements. Since memory begins in utero so too will this process of adaptation.

A child is born with the capacity to incarnate his environment, but he will only do so if he feels secure. For this he needs to find familiar points of reference such as his mother's voice. At birth there are no

preconceived ideas or expectations. The child will take everything life offers.

By approximately 6 years old the child is already a child of his environment. He has acquired the language, movement, likes and dislikes, prejudices religion and foods of the group. He will develop the mentality of the group. At the beginning of life the group that makes the

biggest impact is family. By about 6 the child has adapted to his environment and is completely different from any other child his age. He has developed a sense of belonging and will become a citizen of his group. He is secure in his environment and moves freely between his inner self and the environment.

Maria Montessori said that "man is not fixed", the child has the power to adapt to any environment. This is why she calls the child "the father of man". Through adaptation he will become the man of tomorrow. In an unpublished lecture Dr. Montessori said "We stand with wonder before this picture of the infant who comes, sleeping and smiling into this complicated world - all the time taking in from his environment, adapting himself to the civilization into which he was born. It is all the same whether he is born into the Stone Age, thousands of years ago; or into some quiet epoch like the middle ages; or into the midst of a mechanical age like that in which we live. This is the fundamental fact, that he is able to absorb by nature what he finds in his environment. He accepts everything with astonishing ease and in every epoch reveals himself truly 'The Son of Man'. This is his work - to accept it all. If it were not for this, there could be no continuity or progress in 'civilization'."

Toddler Continue:

The human over 6 years old can never adapt because he is no longer in the process, it is done. At this point man can only *adjust* to a new environment. The reason for this is because when an adult moves to a new environment he loses his identity. He arrives with expectations, prejudices and preferences. He will never truly belong to a new environment 100%. The older a person gets the harder it becomes to adjust to a new environment.

The process of adaptation gives the child the ability to function independently. This independence provides the structure necessary for the next stage of development. In order for us to aide in this process we must provide the proper environment. We must learn to trust the child and have faith that he is going to

become what he is meant to become. We must prepare the environment, both at school and home with our deepest love for the child. It is important to acknowledge that the child is the only one who can go through this process and therefore must be an active learner. The adult must allow the child to reach his maximum effort. By preparing this environment in class and at home we allow the child to adapt completely. We allow the human tendencies to function, give freedom of movement and sensorial exploration.

## Primary News " 'Tis the season to be busy" by Mrs. Vargas

Happy Holidays!

It seems as if we just started school last week and we are already at Thanksgiving. Even though the season is busier and will escalate even further to the end of the year tries to slow down with your children at home and do a few quiet calm activities to really enjoy this time of year. Since I last wrote we have gone to the apple farm in Williamson which was a lot of fun. Thank you Mrs. Van Vechten for arranging that trip. We also went to the potato farm which has become a perennial favorite. When we returned we made chocolate cookies with mashed potatoes that the class donated to the fall Festival. We will finish up our potatoes for our Harvest dinner.

The children have been very busy with movable alphabets, phonograms and grammar symbols in the language area. Math activities have been worked on diligently also. Some children are working on multiplication, the bank game or the introductory lessons to the decimal system. Felix and Mabel have become our resident music teachers, teaching the other children how to play songs from their

repertoire.



" 'Tis the season to be busy" and busy they are.

Two weeks ago we had a parent curriculum evening in which we discussed " adaptation". We did this as a team and although only five parents showed up we had a lively and fruitful discussion on the points we presented.

Adaptation: Related to the idea of an absorbent mind (Haines 1993) is a special power of the young child that can be called the power of adaptation. This power is a process whereby the young child absorbs the culture of her time and place, taking in all the spirit, the customs, the ambitions and attitudes of a society by simply living in that society. How does adaptation take place? In school, starts with the three-period lesson. Choose. Do. Return. This is the foundation of their experience in the classroom. The new child starts out by learning how to choose a work that has

been shown to them, completing it, and returning it to the shelf to the best of their ability. This process repeats in preparing, having, and cleaning up snack or lunch, getting ready to enter or leave school or go outside, approaching others, socializing, and moving on to other work.

It is important to have similarly structured work at home with beginning (getting prepared, gathering materials), middle (doing chore or activity), and end (clean up).

The job of the adult is to prepare the environment of the child so that she can do things for herself and stay out of the way. Montessorians often recognize that the adult is the biggest obstacle to the child. "For the child to increase, the adult must decrease." Enjoy your brief respite from your daily activities.



## Primary News, by Mrs. Van Vechten

As fall marches forward so have the activities in our classroom.

We have been discussing the seasons and the changes in nature during the transition from summer to fall and upcoming winter. We have been looking at leaves, trees, and vegetables of the harvest and discussing the changes in weather. The children enjoyed making crafts for our school Fall Festival. Thank you to the parents who were able to come to class and help with the craft making and all who assisted with the Fall Festival. That was a fun filled day for all!

We discussed Christopher Columbus and his coming to North America. This offered a nice opportunity to look at the world map and learn the names of countries he was involved with such as Spain, Italy etc. and their flags.

Children Teach Parents night was an enjoyable one. The children are always eager to show you their work and class environment. Thank you for coming and we

look forward to seeing you at the next one in the spring.

The extended day students had a field trip to Chase Farms in Perinton to dig potatoes. It was a beautiful fall day and the children enjoyed the process of digging potatoes and seeing farm animals. Thank you Mrs. Vargas for scheduling this trip.



## Primary Continue:

The Parent Teacher Conferences were a wonderful opportunity to meet and discuss your child's progress. If you ever have any questions or concerns please do not hesitate to contact me. Thanks for all you do each day to support your child and our school.

We had our Harvest Celebration on 10/31. I carved our pumpkin and each child had the chance to scoop seeds out. The children voted on the shape of the eyes, nose and whether they wanted a mouth with or without teeth. Square eyes and nose and a mouth with teeth won the most votes.

There were ooh's and aah's when the pumpkin turned



into a Jack O Lantern as the candle was lit. Following that we had a group snack. Thank you to all of the families who donated yummy treats. As the days passed our Jack O

Lantern took on a different look as he started to get old and rot. We read a book our class favorite, "Pumpkin Jack" and then took Jack out to the school garden to decompose.

Our classroom is now open for parent observations. Our day for observation is Wednesday from 9:30am to 10:00am. You can schedule an appointment with the office. If Wednesday is not convenient for you please see me and we can pick a suitable time. If you have a child that stays in the afternoon or you are a morning parent who would like to see the afternoon work period please see me to set up an observation. The classroom is also open to outside observers so if you know of a friend or family member who might want to learn about Montessori please have them call the office for an appointment.

We had our annual Tasting Party on Tuesday November 25<sup>th</sup>. This is always a tasty event as the

children taste various raw and cooked fruits and vegetables. We come together as a group and discuss the food item (whether it is a fruit or vegetable, how it grows) as they taste it. We cleanse our palates with lemon slices between each item. The lemons are always a big hit. Thank you to all who donated items.

We have had fire drills and been discussing fire safety. I encourage you as a family to have a family fire drill and a family meeting place outside your home in the event of a true fire emergency. This will offer your child a sense of security of what to do in the case of a fire.

As the holiday season starts I would like to invite you to come and share your family holiday tradition with the students. We discuss many cultures and how they celebrate fall/winter holidays, however it is always nice when a parent shares that with the children. Let me know if you would like to do this.

We would like to thank Trish Corcoran (Eva Nielsen's Mom) who is Native American and came to our class to share story telling. It was very interesting to the all. Thanks Trish!



### Primary Continued:

One of the life skills we work toward in our classroom environment is your child's ability toward adaptation. The Oxford American Dictionary defines adaptation as "fit, adjust." Annette Haines an AMI (Association Montessori Internationale) teacher trainer and school consultant defines adaptation in the AMI/USA Parenting Newsletter March 2003 as "the young child absorbs the culture of her time and place taking in all the spirit, the customs, the ambitions and attitudes of a society by simply living in that society." By being part of a community the child needs to belong to that group and become a part of that group. To belong to a group you must assume responsibility for your actions and growth. To become part of a group you must identify with others who are developed. The best way a child is able to adapt, belong and become a part of a group is through the modeling the adult exhibits. The young child is eager to do the right thing yet they do not know what that is. They look to the adult to guide them with limits and order. Our role as adults whether at home or school is to offer expectations for the child and support them with follow through. This will give the child needed tools to move forward in their development with clear definitions of how far he/she can go. These expectations are not unique to young children. We all have expectations placed on us each day. Look at your work situation and you can see how expectations assist you in being successful each day. If you did not have expectations you would feel out of place and out of sorts. The young child has the same distress when the adults do not offer the expectations or limits on how to maneuver through their environment whether it is at home, school, Grandma and Grandpa's, the library etc. Offering these tools toward adaptation will allow the child the opportunity to truly belong and become a member of his/her environment. Dr. Montessori tells us in her book "The Absorbent Mind" that children have an inner developmental force urging them on to interact with their environment. When the environment is prepared for the child to freely move about satisfying the natural development the child can reach his/her

highest potential with the most satisfaction. As the child comes to adaptation we will see a happy, self disciplined child who demonstrates concentrated work periods without tiring. This joyful cycle spurs the child on to take in the next experience on his road to developing himself. I have had a saying for many years, "Happy children make happy parents." How can you get started on moving your child forward on the road of adaptation? Look at an area you would like your child to improve on such as maybe not leaving shoes in the hallway or leaving toys out. Take one task and for one to two weeks every time you see the toys left out call the child back and have them put them away with complete follow through. This will take perseverance but after one to two weeks the issue should be solved and you will feel empowered as a parent to take on another issue in the same manner. It also will offer the child steps toward self esteem by completing the task and knowing he/she can be a functioning member of his/her community. Enjoy and remember we all have an important role in partnering with your child in the journey toward his/her full development! If you need suggestions or support please see me.

We want to wish you and your family a very Happy Thanksgiving and holiday season. We are thankful for having the gift of sharing each day with your child !





On Tuesday, November 24<sup>th</sup> the Elementary Class prepared and served a Thanksgiving Feast to thirty-seven people. The menu included:

- Turkey and gravy
- Vegetable soup
- Yams with pineapple and marshmallows
- Corn pudding
- Apple sauce
- A special Polish cabbage dish called kapusta made by Mrs. Hilma
- Corn muffins
- Fruit punch

The children made the applesauce with Mrs. Barry and Mrs. Verma. They made enough to serve the entire student body and staff. This event was special as there also was a reading about thanksgiving by Mr. Goodwin. Also this was the first time the entire school had come together as a group.

The children spent a great deal of time working on this event and you may ask why we would prepare such a feast at this time. The reasons are many. First, the children experience what is involved in planning an event and develop an appreciation for the work involved.

In order to prepare for a large group, the recipes had to be doubled, tripled and sometimes even quadrupled. This provided those working on fractions with a true-life experience for use of fractions. As they followed each recipe there was practice for everyone in measurement of ingredients. Those making the punch experienced liquid measurements and expanded their recipes from cups to gallons. Those serving on the set-up committee had to plan for each place setting, count the necessary tables and arrange the place settings. The decorations committee helped each child make an Indian or Pilgrim hat, made place cards and decorations for the tables.

There was a necessity for cooperation between committees as well. The serving of the applesauce required set-ups, decorations, servers and plans for serving all of the children.

All had a great time and we enjoyed the festivities. We are now in the process of compiling our recipes for all to enjoy.

Jo Landis

## Elementary—Miss Lamb



Welcome to the beginning of snow season! Many of you have asked me about whether the children go out for recess when it is snowing. Ms. Amara and I both believe it is good for the children to go out whenever possible. Unless it is raining and cold or it is below 20°F with the wind chill, we will be taking the children outside. Please send your full-day child equipped with boots, snow pants, coat, hat, and waterproof gloves. When you work with your children at home, please have them put on snow pants, then boots, then coat, then hat, leaving mittens for last. We will help them tuck in the mittens, but if they learn to put them on before their coats, they are unable to zip their clothing themselves.

Another way you can support your child in the chilly weather is to dress them in layers. Our class is variable in how warm or cool it feels. Layers allow your children to adapt to their needs depending on how warm or cold they feel on a given day. If your child likes to be bundled, please send a sweater or sweatshirt to keep at school. We do not allow them to wear winter coats in the classroom as the bulkiness of a winter jacket interferes with a child's sense of herself in space. She will sometimes bump into objects in the room without feeling it, interfering with her ability to interact with the environment. (This can lead to children telling someone that she has knocked

something over and her denying it because she didn't notice when it happened! As you can imagine, this can lead to arguments and hurt feelings.)

Please send your child a pair of slippers or sneakers to keep at school for indoor shoes. They must have a back on the heel to stay on. It is helpful to have a waterproof sole to avoid soaking up spills as well (or in case of an emergency that requires us to leave the building).

Thank you to the families who were able to make it to our invitational workshop on Adaptation. It was a great discussion. There were many wonderful questions, observations, and insights offered by attending parents. Don't worry if you were not invited to this event, we will be having another invitational event for other families. Your invitation is based on where your child is developmentally, not on a particular "problem" or situation. For those of you who were not invited or couldn't make it, we would like to offer an overview on the topic.

For me, the most remarkable thing about Adaptation is that it is a universal quality of children throughout time and throughout the world. It has existed since the dawn of humanity and will continue down the generations. The concept is, at its most basic, that any child will effortlessly become a full member of whatever community or communities that they are included in. As long as the child is a participant and is allowed to practice basic skills on their own, s/he will learn how to manage daily life skills as varied as how people clean and care for their environment - living space, clothing, themselves, plants, pets, gardens, the natural world; how they cook - whether over fire, gas burner, electric burner, with an oven, without an oven; where they procure food - grocery, garden, raising livestock, etc.; how they communicate - with peers, elders, youth, family, teachers, religious leaders, community members, etc. All of this takes place without any conscious "teaching." It occurs simply by

Elementary continued:

First, you can assist your child by giving or, better yet allowing, him some things to do for himself, particularly things that prompt the "I want to do it" response. He should have a clear picture of the expected outcome of his efforts; this may become more refined over time. In the beginning, a buttoned sweater is closed in the front. As he grows, his sweater will also have each button matched to the appropriate button hole.

Second, make sure she has seen each step in the process modeled. We adults are so proficient at tying bows on a shoe that it seems just a blur to the child. For her to master the process, she has to see every step. When your child shows an interest in doing something, *slow down*.

Show each step in the process. Let her see you *do* the whole process. Even if she is eager to jump in, make sure she *sees the entire process with all the steps first*. Assure her that she will get a turn. Undo the job and be sure to give her the promised turn, without interruption (unless you are **asked** to help).



If your child had done an adequate job and is proud, let her efforts stand. This helps to develop and protect self-esteem. I feel less competent when someone redoes a job I just took pride in completing. If the child notices a flaw in their own final effort (i.e. complains his feet hurt when his shoes are on the wrong feet, or that snow is getting into his boots where his snow pants are not pulled down), that is the time to help him see where he can improve a particular detail of the job. (The language I like to offer in

these situations is to phrase my correction as, "When I am trying to do X, I like to do Y," instead of using the more common, "When you..., you should..." directive.)

The good news is that no matter how much consciousness or effort we put into "teaching" our children how to be a member of the communities they interact in,

they are developmentally "designed" to become part of the group simply by living in it.

We hope you all had an enjoyable Thanksgiving holiday. Ms. Amara and I are both thankful to be members of such a caring, compassionate, and welcoming community. Thank you all for all of the ways, both large and small, in which you contribute to our classroom community. We are truly blessed to have the privilege of watching your children learn and grow.

## Marketing Committee News, by Anne Margaret Weis and Lisa Schlonski

### MARKETING COMMITTEE - WHAT HAVE WE BEEN UP TO?

Hello everyone! Since our last newsletter there has been a tremendous amount of activity happening. Not just with the marketing committee, but with the school in general. There are many ways that parents can participate in events that support our school, and we are happy to list some of them here for you now.

### HELP US PROMOTE WMS! WHERE CAN WE BE SEEN?

#### ~Community Boards

Have you ever wondered how you could help promote the school to others? One area that the committee is concentrating on is the "free" opportunities out there. For example, you may have noticed that we place

#### Website

There is an effort each month to post our events/open houses to a number of local websites, for free. We are currently posting to local newspapers/penny savers, Mom Groups (Kids Out and About), Craigslist, and news (rnews)...to list a few. If you feel we should be advertising somewhere else please drop a note off to the office so we can add it to our comprehensive list. So many people are on the internet these days, looking for things to do and such, and you'll notice that many schools are doing the same thing. We want to ensure that WMS is available to them as well.

### BRANDING WORKSHOP WITH THE Ad Council of Rochester

A group of staff and board members were invited to attend a "Brand Development" workshop through the Ad Council of Rochester. It's a one-day retreat to help an organization leverage themselves to our customer base. It was a fantastic event, with many positive outcomes, and many of us are excited about what the future holds for WMS. We don't want to talk too much about this right now because an infrastructure needs to be created first...but we promise that you will start to see a change in consistency in how the school is

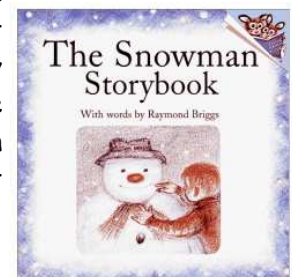
monthly ads on various Webster community boards (i.e. Hegedorns, Panera Bread, Webster Library). We are seeking individuals to help us post flyers to local area community boards (on a monthly basis or whenever you can spare) advertising our events/open houses. This simple task can help raise awareness for WMS and possibly turn into higher enrollments.

We would like to reach out to the community past Webster. If you live in an area other than Webster, and frequent places that post community boards, please let us know and we'll provide you with flyers!

perceived, marketed, and promoted.

### BARNES & NOBLE BOOKFAIR - HOW CAN YOU HELP PROMOTE THIS FUNDRAISER?

As you know the next "fun"raiser for WMS is the annual Barnes & Noble Bookfair on Thursday, December 11<sup>th</sup>, from 9am - 9pm. What is a bookfair? It's an awesome opportunity to buy books and other stuff (such as calendars, journals, games, candy/chocolates, glasses, bookmarks, notepads) - and support your child's school at the same time! The key is to **spread the word** to everyone you know! Here's what you do: Call your friends and family and let them know to **"Save The Date" of December 11<sup>th</sup>**. Let them know that on that day whatever they purchase at the Webster Barnes & Noble store will benefit WMS. It's that simple! AND...if they especially come between the hours of 5PM-9PM they can get their items gift wrapped...**for free!**



Marketing continued:

Here is a schedule of events for Thursday, December 11<sup>th</sup> as of now (we may add to a few time slots not listed here):

9:30am - Hanukkah Story and a craft (typically for little children under 3)

10:00am - Christmas Story and a craft (same as above)

10:30am - Hanukkah Story and a craft (typically for children 3 and older)

11:00am - Christmas Story and a craft (same as above)

12:00pm - "Invite Your Friends and Family to Lunch"

1:00pm - Story and Sing-A-Long Jingle Bell Style!

4:00pm - "Invite Your Friends and Family to Early Bird Dinner"

5:00pm - Free Gift Wrapping Table is Open (Closes at 9pm with store)

5:00pm - Instrumental Suzuki Players

6:00pm - Family Chorus led by Mercedes Allen

7:00pm - Pajama Party!

This is a big day for WMS! "Word of mouth" advertising is one of our largest assets, so the more people you tell the better chance we have at benefiting the school. The store is loaded with so many gifts there's bound to be something on your holiday list that can be purchased there!

So, to wrap up (no pun intended!) the committee has been busy working on promoting the school and its events. However, it takes more than a committee to make this happen. It takes *you*, the parents and grandparents and supportive friends, that believe in the school and the Montessori-way and the desire to see it soar. Thanks for listening. We hope to see you at the events at the book fair. Come watch and support your fellow Montessori children and parents read, do crafts, eat lunch/dinner, sing/play instruments and finally get snugly for bed!



Hello and thank you for taking the *time* to read this newsletter!!

Time is an important part of our children's lives. Children mark time by anticipating birthdays (who hasn't heard a child insist they are 4  $\frac{1}{2}$  NOT just 4). As parents, we often feel time is flying by (can you believe you have children learning to read, seems like they just learned to walk). Time is special when we spend it with our children.

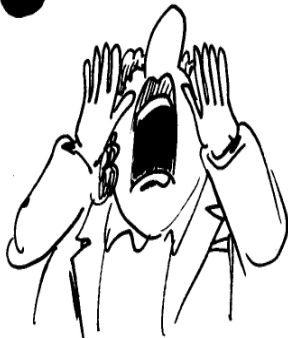
Much time is spent at school by our staff and directresses. There is a vast amount of work and coordination required to keep a school like ours running successfully. Our staff and directresses do an amazing job and yet we find there is always more to do. Our school is actively engaged in providing opportunities beyond classroom learning including social events, educational enrichment, service projects, parent meetings, and on and on.

As a school, the time given by our parents is precious. All of these activities that make Webster Montessori School so unique could not happen without the time donated by parents.

It takes thousands of hours to do it all. With many families helping the projects are easier and more successful. Most importantly, our children benefit from an enriched school experience.

Please consider sharing your time and expertise with our school. We have things requiring help in many areas including Social Events, Fundraising, and Long Range Planning. You can contact the committee chairs or any member of the staff or Board of Trustees to find out about the many ways to share your time with our school. Thank you!

# Volunteers!



Board Room continued:

### 2008-2009 Board of Trustees

<u>Member</u>		<u>Chair of:</u>
JJ Griebel	Parent	Executive Committee
Scott Mulcahy	Parent	Finance Committee
Sarah DiChiara	Parent	Secretary
Pete Chatfield	Community Member	Long Range Planning
Linda Lenston	Community Member	
Theresa Seil	Community Member	Policy & Procedure
Holly Salce	Parent	Policy & Procedure
Ann Margaret Weis	Parent	Marketing Committee
Birgit Coates	Parent	Parent Participation
Lisa Schlonski	Parent	Marketing, Fundraising

### 2008-2009 Committees

Long Range Planning	Pete Chatfield
IT/Website	Dennis Bacchetta
Fundraising	Nancy Peckham, Suzanne Van Damme
Buildings & Grounds	Chair needed
Marketing	Ann Weis, Lisa Schlonski
Social	Yelena Martin
Parent Participation	Birgit Coates

The joy of children laughing with excitement and running around outside, playing games, making crafts, listening to stories, dancing to live music, enjoying the wonderful variety of homemade treats from all around the world. It sounds almost too good to be true, but it describes what we, the entire Webster Montessori School community enjoyed at this year's Fall Festival. It was a day that turned out to be pure fun for the children and all else who attended the event. Thank you to all the families who made delicious treats, volunteered their time to set up and work during the event. Thank you to the Directresses and staff that stood tirelessly on this brisk day to help out. Thanks to all who attended and purchased Chicken BBQ and Lasagna, all the meals were sold. Together we made this event a success and our hope is to learn from and build upon so that we can have a similar event in the Spring and in the future.

Our Minnie's Best Bake Sale, another successful fundraiser this year raised just over \$1500. Thank you for ordering and selling door to door and to family, friends and co-workers.

We can look forward to our annual Barnes & Noble Book Fair in December. Themed "Holidays From Around The World", the event will include a full day of enjoyment for you and your children. In brief, our events for the day include story time and craft hours that describe what Christmas might be like here and in other countries. Hear a Hanukkah story and make a paper dreidel. Enjoy lunch with friends in the cafe, join in a sing-a-long, listen to the WMS children's chorus and WMS Suzuki violin and cello players, and end the evening by joining in the pajama singing parade. Barnes & Noble will donate 10-20% of all gift, book, and cafe purchases to WMS, so be sure to make a list and tell your friends and family. (Free gift wrapping will also be available during the event with 100% of any donation going to our school). More

details will be provided as the date of the event approaches.

As a final note on our ongoing programs, please continue to bring in Box Top's, Campbell's Soup labels, used cell phones and ink cartridges, and use GoodSearch as your search engine. Our small everyday contributions make a big difference at the end of the year.



October and November have been busy months for our wrap around children. They have been designing, tracing, coloring, pasting and cutting out leaves, pumpkins and scarecrows for decorating our WA rooms. The three WA rooms had fun stuffing large scarecrows to add to our fall festival decorations. The children also enjoyed making applesauce to eat for their afternoon snacks.

In November we learned about Veterans Day and as a project we cut out stars to make a patriotic mobile. The children also put together & colored booklets with pictures of our military soldiers and the different types of equipment used by the military.

To prepare for our Thanksgiving holiday the children have been making Native American rain sticks, totem polls, turkey hats and coloring and cutting out pictures relating to Thanksgiving. We have seen an improvement in their cutting skills and continue to encourage them in their creativity.

We continue to read books to the younger children, and also we have seen wonderful improvement with their sharing negotiating skills with their friends.



Weather permitting we will take the children outside everyday. Please be sure to send your child with the proper outside clothing. Your child will need a winter coat, snow pants, Hat, boots and gloves or mittens.

“The first duty of the educator, whether he is involved with the new-born infant or the older child, is to recognize the human personality of the young being and respect it”.



# DECEMBER

2008

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	1 Board Meeting 4:30	2	3	4	5	6
7	8 Toddler Info Night 6:00 Pm	9	10	11	12 Staff Holiday Celebration Wrap around Closes at 3:15	13
14	15	16	17	18	19 Elementary Holiday Tea 1:00 Pm	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
		<b>Winter Recess</b>				
28	29	30	31			
	<b>Winter Recess</b>					



# January

2009

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				1 Winter Recess School Closed	2	3
4	5 School Reopens	6	7 Elementary Info Night 6:00-7:00	8	9	10
11	12	13	14 Open House 6:00- 7:30	15	16	17
18	19 Martin Luther King Day School Closed	20 Board Meeting 6:00 Pm	21	22 Primary Info Night 6:00-7:00	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

### **New Office Personal !!**

**Introducing our Administrative Assistant,**

**Robine Wolak**



Robine Wolak has been with us now for two weeks and many of you have already gotten to know her. Please introduce yourselves when you have a chance. We are very happy to have her with us. Robine will help with a variety of

administrative work and will help with initiatives in admission and marketing, scheduling and data collection. Computers are familiar territory for her and Robine will add her skills to the many areas requiring her expertise.

### **Enrollment Process starting soon**

If you have any younger children at home that you are considering admissions for 2009. Now is the time to start the process. We look forward to working with you and your child.

### **Mitten drive**

It's time for our Annual Hat & Mitten Drive. You will notice our tree in front of the café please help us decorate the tree. The deadline is Dec 17th and then all hats and mittens will be donated to our sister Montessori school Franklin Montessori School.

