



Monarch Minutes

Classroom Updates

November 2015

Upcoming Events

- 4-5 PTSO Donation Drive
- 5 General PTSO Meeting, 6:30-7:30pm
- 11 Veteran's Day, no school
- 12 CHM@L Middle School Parent Education Night, 6-7:30pm, Annex
- 16 Open House for Prospective Parents (focused on upper elementary and middle grades), 9-10:30am
- 17 Picture Day
- 18 PTSO Board Office Hours (8:45-9am), Principal Eatman's Office
- 18 Family Fun Night, 6-7:30pm
- 19 National Parent Involvement Day
- 23 Open House for Prospective Parents, 9-10:30am
- 25 No Aftercare
- 26-27 Thanksgiving Break, no school
- Dec 4 Professional Development Day, no school

An Evening with the CHM@L Middle School

Thursday November 12, 6pm-7:30pm; CHM@L Annex

Join us for a relaxing evening and learn about what makes our middle school program superb.

We will discuss topics such as:

- Unique programmatic features
- The strength and rigor of our approach to the DCPS curriculum
- Breakout sessions to learn more about Mathematics, English, Humanities, and Science

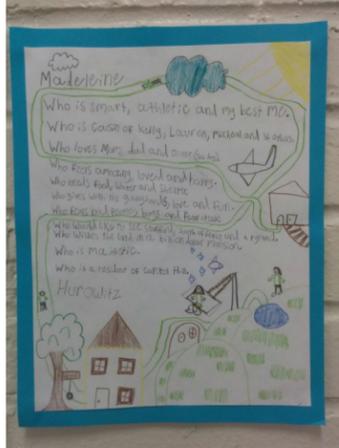
This parent education evening is geared towards lower elementary, upper elementary, and middle school parents. However, if you are a primary parent and are interested in attending, we would be happy to have you!

Elementary students are welcome to attend with your parents.

Complementary childcare will be available and light refreshments will be served. Looking forward to seeing you there!

Ms. Kimboko

This is a little bit of what we have been working on since school started. In class this year we wrote "bio" (biography) poems. They are all done and we also drew on them. We are going to hang them up on the wall soon.



Every morning we do a thing called SWT. SWT stands for sacred writing time. Ms. Kimboko gives us a prompt and we write about it. Most weeks we have a new spelling list; this week it is on Astronomy. It has the planets and other things in space like asteroid and orbit.

We have been doing a lot of research lately with our own fun ideas, like: "How do coconuts crack?" by Isabella and Chanel; comparing Cinderella stories and writing our own by Maddie and Kya; and New Zealand, Australian, and Tasmanian animals by Ashlee. We have been having fun presentations on Fridays. We enjoy watching the presentations and being the ones in it!

Earlier in the year we had a geography lesson and our teacher Ms. Kimboko gave us maps of Washington, D.C. We used colored pencils to draw the borders and colored in the Potomac and Anacostia Rivers. We learned where Maryland and Virginia are, and how far it is from one end to the city. We even found out where we live on the map. All of the things we've been doing this year have been very fun!

-by Maddie Hurovitz (4th grade) and Kya Woods (4th grade)

Ms. Sherri

It has been a busy first eight weeks of school. We have spent a lot of time exploring the theme of friendship and citizenship in our classroom. We have fallen in love with "My First Best Friend" by Jack Prelutsky. Collectively we have decided that we don't wish to have or be friends like those in the poem. In September we celebrated Johnny Appleseed's birthday by making applesauce in our classroom. We really enjoyed that activity! We are also counting to the 100th day of school.

We welcomed Ms. Anna to our classroom. Many of our students were already familiar with Ms. Anna (mom to Ezra in Ms. Lowery's class) as she came to listen to readers last year. Ms. Anna loves reading and handicrafts. She has been teaching the children how to finger knit, which is hugely popular in our classroom.

Currently the full day students are finishing up their work with forces and motion. We have had a lot of hands-on fun with movement. We played the Hokey Pokey and talked about different types of movement, we went on a movement treasure hunt in our classroom, and recently we conducted an experiment with pushes and the slide on the playground. We learned some new vocabulary -force, mass, and hypothesis. We have had a great start to the school year.

Ms. Lowery



This year has started off with great focus. While learning words like "progress" and contemplating how we can choose progress each day, the children are putting into practice age-appropriate discussions about work, challenges, and perseverance.

In the class, children are working on understanding place value. Second year students are breaking down numbers into each value and practicing multiplication facts. Third graders are using numbers on number lines and multiplying quantities.



Haunted Harvest

Haunted Harvest was a huge success!



Students, teachers and parents came together for a frighteningly fun time. THANK YOU to our amazing Haunted Harvest lead Kyana Miner. She did an awesome job and devoted so much time and energy to the success of this event. And THANK YOU to every parent, teacher, and student. The event would not be possible without your generosity and commitment. The PTSO Haunted Harvest team raised a grand total of \$5,393 from this event. And the CHM@L community time we all shared was priceless!



We had a huge chili contest turn out: 16 contestants! Congratulations to chili contest champions Claire Montaut and Brian Kernek. Both winners have children in Ms. McCracken's room. That class will receive \$118 for the classroom!

Thank you to our generous sponsors: Penn Hill Group, Fulcrum Properties, Saving Grace Petcare, and the Daily Rider. And many thanks to Relay Foods for donating the bananas.



PTSO News & Notes

LIBRARY PLANNING

Many of you have heard about the PTSO efforts to improve our primary/elementary and middle school libraries. As part of this effort, we are asking teachers, parents, and students to complete surveys so that we can learn about what you need and want our school library. Please keep an eye out for that survey.

SCHOOL SAFETY

Please enter and exit the school building through the front entrance only. Alarms will be installed soon in other entrances/exits that will sound if you open the door. Also, please only park in non-staff designated parking spots. Orange cones have been placed in the parking lot to prevent cars from parking in the thru lane. These measures are being taken for the safety of everyone.

PLEASE DONATE!

Thank you to those families who have donated already. We **aim for 100% participation in giving** for the school year at an amount that makes sense for your family. If 300 families give \$20 a month for the next three months that's \$18,000! If those families give \$50 a month for that same period, we will raise over \$45,000! It adds up quickly so please give what you can.

So that you can plan accordingly, there will be four more donation days this fall: **November 4th and 5th**, and **December 9th and 10th**. Forms are available on donation days, on our website, and on the table in the front hall.

The Annual Giving Campaign provides funds for virtually every aspect of your child's life at school, including classroom materials, academic development, building and grounds maintenance, clubs, professional development, student retention, family fun nights, international day, parent education events, and so much more.

This year's Annual Giving Campaign would not only provide funds to support those items, but we hope to provide support for our **growing elementary and new middle school libraries**, including additional reading space, quiet learning space, and organizational materials. In addition, while we have a wonderful playground for our students, we hope funds will allow for additional **investment into our outdoor space**, including a shade system in the playground, musical exploration, and other outdoor materials to expand the play areas for our students. Lastly, we hope to provide a **unique and significant conference or summit experience** for our middle school students like the Montessori Institute for the Science of Peace Water Conference that many students attended last year. Of course we will vote on a budget in June where you can help decide where your money will go.

November 2015

Box Tops products are perfect for the fall holiday season! Ziploc food storage products, Hefty paper plates and cups, Hefty garbage bags, some Kleenex tissues, Green Giant fresh veggies, Nature Valley granola bars, and Mott's apple juices and applesauces are just some of the many products that have Box Tops. Also coming very soon to Box Tops for Education: Annie's Homegrown crackers, frozen products, and macaroni & cheese!



Many thanks to the families who have diligently brought in Box Tops thus far this school year. Keep clipping!!! The goal is \$1000!

For more information go to: <http://www.BTFE.com>

Student Council

On September 30, 2015, Capitol Hill Montessori held its first student council election. The election was a success! Having a student council allows the students to have a voice and the energetic and excited participation of the students shows that they are eager to contribute.



Capitol Hill Montessori students elected a group of elementary officers and a group of middle school officers to make up the student council.

The elementary officers are: Talia Trotter - President, Scholar Blango - Vice President, Kaylin Gunthrope - Treasurer, and Archer Briscoe - Secretary. More students will be announced for the elementary representatives.

The middle school officers are: Madison Scott - President, Jessica Genuso - Vice President, Adrienne Davis - Treasurer, Vanessa Ridout - Secretary, and Gregory Melchior-Fisher—member at large.

The student council will work to advocate for the student community as a whole. Currently, the student council is in the midst of planning a series of events, activities, and service initiatives for the school year.

Montessori Child @ Home

October 24 - November 8, times vary
Kids Euro Festival 2015

Most events are free, some require reservations. Recommended ages vary.

Kids Euro Festival is a two-week long festival of European arts and culture presenting more than 150 free activities to D.C. metro area children and their families. There are performances, concerts, workshops, movies, storytelling, and more...and it's all brought to you by the 28 European Union Member States!

<http://kidseurofestival.org>

October 23 - November 8, 10:00 am - 4:00 pm
National Arboretum, Autumn Bonsai (Special Exhibits Wing).

Free. No registration required. All ages.

No need to leave town for leaf peeping – these miniature masterpieces glow with brilliant autumn colors. Appreciate the artistry and nature of each unique tree in this formal display featuring those with the most striking fall features, including foliage, fruits, and berries.

<http://www.usna.usda.gov/Education/events.html>

Friday, November 7, 7:00 pm
Washington National Cathedral, Letters from War - A Tribute to Veterans

Free, no tickets required. Parking \$10. Upper elementary and middle school.

The Cathedral presents a concert tribute on Veterans Day weekend featuring “The President’s Own” Marine Chamber Orchestra, Washington National Cathedral Choir, and selections from American War Letters. This 75-minute program of inspiring words and music in the magnificent setting of the Washington National Cathedral gives tribute to the service and sacrifice of all service men and women of the armed forces and their families.

Saturday, November 14, 10:00 am - 5:00 pm
Renwick Festival at the Renwick Gallery

Free. All ages.

Experience the Renwick Gallery as never before, with craft making, artist demonstrations, musical performances, games, and more. Come see the new contemporary art installations of the WONDER exhibition and enjoy a fun-filled day with activities for all ages.

<http://americanart.si.edu/calendar/event.cfm?trumbaEmbed=view%3Devent%26eventid%3D115628855>

Saturday, November 14 & Sunday, November 15, 2:00 pm - 4:00 pm
Sackler Gallery, Sculpting to the Beat (Sublevel 2, ImaginAsia Classroom)

Free, registration required. Recommended ages 6-12 with adult participation.

Bring your dancing shoes and discover how rhythm and sound are conveyed in the Freer's collection of [South Asian and Himalayan art](#). Start with an educator-led tour, and then create sculptures using clay and mixed media. This tuneful program for families is designed for ages 6–12 with adult participation.

<http://www.asia.si.edu/events/families.asp#/?i=5>

Getting to Know Ms. Pearson



Ms. Pearson assists in the primary classroom of Ms. McCracken. She is also a parent at our school!

1. What is your favorite Montessori material and why?

My favorite Montessori material is the movable alphabet because it can be used in so many ways for reading and writing.

2. What is your favorite children's book?

Miss Nelson is Missing, by Harry G. Allard Jr. and illustrated by James Marshall.

3. What made you interested in the Montessori Method?

My interest in the Montessori Method came from using the environment to learn. I believe utilizing your space freely is the best way to learn.

4. What do you like to do when you're not at school?

When I'm not at school I love to go to the movies and the park with my daughters Taj and Tisyn.

5. Tell us something surprising about yourself that we wouldn't otherwise know.

I love to travel and cook!!

CHM@L Cross Country

It was a successful season for the cross country team this fall, ending with the championship meet on October 24. Cross country is a running sport in which individuals run races on open air courses over natural terrain. The team was coached by CHM@L custodian Mr. Raycheo Ford and Ms. Brown, a CHM@L parent. As a student at Eastern High School, Mr. Ford ran track and cross country. He said he "felt it was important for CHM@L students to have the opportunity to participate" in sports and wanted to help by being a coach.



Twenty-one students participated this year from grades 4th-8th. The runners practiced three afternoons each week by running around the Capitol Hill neighborhood, including Stanton Park and near the Capitol Building. The team participated in a number of meets against other D.C. public schools. The cross country course for elementary students is 2 miles long; it is 2.5 miles long for middle school students.

Team Captain Madison Scott, 8th grader, said cross country has taught her "to never give up and to work hard." Santana Robinson, 5th grader, said he liked running. He said he learned he "is fast and that I can come in first place if I put my mind to it." Congratulations to the team on a great season and thank you to coaches Mr. Ford and Ms. Brown! Indoor track starts this winter.



Spotlight on Montessori Materials



What is that Primary Montessori Material?

It is the Folding Cloths!

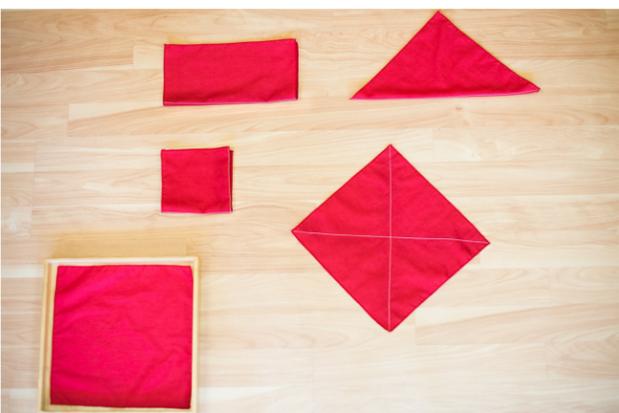
Folding is one of the Care of the Environment lessons in the Practical Life area. It is sometimes referred to as a preliminary exercise because it is presented early in the child's first year in the Primary Montessori classroom. Preliminary exercises isolate skills that help a child achieve independence within the classroom community. The skills acquired while working with the Folding Cloths extend to real-life folding of the classroom dusting and polishing cloths, aprons, napkins, washcloths, and towels.

The Folding Cloths are square cloths that have different stitched lines indicating where to fold them, with one cloth left blank without any lines on it. The cloths are contained in a flat basket or tray. Some teachers use a small stool for the tray of cloths to be placed next to the work table and other teachers place the tray of cloths on the work table.



The teacher will invite the child to join her in carrying the materials from the shelf to the work table and then sit with him to demonstrate how to fold the various cloths along the stitched lines. She will take the first cloth from the tray by grasping two corners of the cloth, lay it on the table in front of him, run a finger along the stitched line which stretches across the middle of the cloth, take two corners of the cloth and bring them up to the two opposite corners. The cloth has been folded in half to form a rectangle. She will run her finger along the stitched line that reappears along the fold and move

the cloth up to the top of the table. She will repeat this process with each cloth, pointing out the lines before and after each fold. The next cloth has one stitched line diagonally across the cloth, forming a triangle when folded. The third cloth has two stitched lines that intersect to form a + symbol. She shows him to first fold the cloth in half, forming a rectangle, then rotate the cloth to notice the second line and fold it in half again to form a square. The next cloth will have two diagonal lines that intersect to form an x, which will form a smaller triangle after two folds. The last cloth has no lines on it, so it can be folded in any manner. When all of the cloths have been folded, the teacher and child can observe the shapes that have been formed. The teacher will then show the child how to unfold the cloths and return them to the tray and will invite the child to work with the materials independently. The teacher is always nearby if the child needs support while working with the cloths and when putting them back on the shelf.



What is that Elementary Montessori Material?

It is the Racks and Tubes!



Racks & Tubes is used to introduce long division. Using this material the children can solve problems like $345 \div 34$ or $584 \div 5$. Each wooden rack is color coded to represent a number "family" (white for the unit family, gray for the thousands family, and black for the millions family). Each rack holds ten test tubes and each test tube has ten beads. The beads are also color coded (green for units, blue for tens, and red for hundreds). In this way a green bead from a unit family rack indicates 1 and a blue bead from a unit family rack represents 10.

To set up a new problem the child gets the appropriate beads for the dividend and puts them in the cups that match the racks. The child then puts out "skittles" onto answer boards to represent the divisor. By following a careful and rather lengthy process of sharing out the beads equally to the skittles, the child finds the answer in how many beads a unit skittle gets. After more experience with Racks & Tubes, dividing by a three digit and then by a four digit divisor becomes possible. Eventually the child moves into abstraction and is able to do the long division process on paper with an understanding of what the process of dividing means.

The teacher will then show the child how to unfold the cloths and return them to the tray and will invite the child to work with the materials independently. The teacher is always nearby if the child needs support while working with the cloths and when putting them back on the shelf.

The points of interest for this activity are the stitched lines, bringing the corners of the cloths together when folding them, and the resulting shapes. The purposes are visual motor coordination, care of the environment, and an indirect preparation for geometry. The child is, of course, only aware of the fact that he is enjoying his new lesson and independent work with the Folding Cloths.

Montessori University

On Saturday, October 3, our community enjoyed a parent education session called Montessori University. The keynote speaker was Dr. Patricia Jennings, a professor at the University of Virginia, who gave a talk about mindfulness in education and parenting. Jennings has written a book called *Mindfulness for Teachers: Simple Skills for Peace and Productivity in the Classroom* and is an internationally recognized leader in the fields of social and emotional learning.



Participants attended a variety of break-out education sessions led by CHM@L teachers and staff. Thank you so much to everyone who participated, to the teachers and staff who presented, and to Ms. Sherri for organizing this event. We look forward to additional parent education sessions, which will be planned for later this year.

At-Home Math Vocabulary and Fun

The primary Montessori concrete materials such as the number rods, golden beads, and constructive triangles offer children effective and enticing tools to explore math concepts.

Language is a key part of those concepts. Here are some math words that parents could use in situations at home to bolster their child's math vocabulary:

- fewest, least
- farthest, nearest
- counting on (starting at a number other than 1)
- one more, one less; two more, two less
- greater than / less than
- set of items

For an additional fun way to incorporate math into your daily routine with your child, check out the "Bedtime Math" website: www.bedtimemath.org. You can sign up for a daily email or download the free app. Each day, you'll receive three wacky math riddles at different levels of difficulty, geared for wee ones, little kids, and big kids. It's a quick way to make math fun and enjoyable for the whole family!



At-Home Reading

At Montessori University, Ms. Sherri posed this question: How often do your children see *you* reading? Would your answer change if you learned that seeing you reading your phone or other electronic media doesn't count? Seeing you read books is important for your child, as is reading books to and with your child. The American Library Association has recommended booklists for all ages: www.ala.org/alsc/booklists. ALA also lists Caldecott and Newbery award winners, and provides guidance for building an at-home library. Our CHM@L teachers, led by Ms. Sherri, have put together a list of favorite suggestions for primary students, which will continue next issue. Happy Reading!

- **600 BLACK SPOTS: A POP-UP BOOK FOR CHILDREN OF ALL AGES**, Carter, David A.
- **ABUELA**, Dorros, Arthur
- **ALEXANDER AND THE TERRIBLE, HORRIBLE, NO GOOD, VERY BAD DAY**, Viorst, Judith
- **AFRICAN ANIMAL ALPHABET**, Joubert, Beverly and Dereck
- **ALFIE GETS IN FIRST**, Hughes, Shirley
- **ANANSI AND THE MOSS-COVERED ROCK**, Kimmel, Eric A.
- **ANDY AND THE LION**, Daugherty, James
- **ANIMALS SHOULD DEFINITELY NOT WEAR CLOTHING**, Barrett, Judi
- **ANNO'S COUNTING HOUSE**, Anno, Mitsumasa
- **BARK, GEORGE**, Feiffer, Jules
- **THE BOSSY GALLITO: A TRADITIONAL CUBAN FOLK TALE**, Gonzalez, Lucia M., retold by; illustrated by Lulu Delacre
- **BREAD AND JAM FOR FRANCES**, Hoban, Russell; illustrated by Lillian Hoban
- **BROWN BEAR, BROWN BEAR, WHAT DO YOU SEE?**, Martin, Bill, Jr.; illustrated by Eric Carle
- **BRUNO MUNARI'S ABC**, Munari, Bruno
- **BUZ**, Egielski, Richard
- **BARN DANCE!**, Martin, Bill Jr.
- **BEWARE OF BOYS**, Blundell, Tony
- **BINK & GOLLIE**, DiCamillo, Kate and Alison McGhee. Illustrated by Tony Fucile.
- **CAPS FOR SALE; A TALE OF A PEDDLER, SOME MONKEYS AND THEIR THE CARROT SEED**, Krauss, Ruth; illustrated by Crockett Johnson
- **THE CAZUELA THAT THE FARM MAIDEN STIRRED**, Vamos, Samantha R.
- **A CHAIR FOR MY MOTHER**, Williams, Vera B.
- **CHICKA CHICKA BOOM BOOM**, Martin, Bill, Jr. and John Archambault; illustrated by Lois Ehlert
- **CHESTER'S WAY**, Henkes, Kevin
- **CHICKEN MAN**, Edwards, Michelle
- **CHICKENS AREN'T THE ONLY ONES**, Heller, Ruth
- **COME ALONG, DAISY!**, Simmons, Jane
- **CORDUROY**, Freeman, Don
- **CURIOUS GEORGE**, Rey, H. A.
- **THE DARK**, Snicket, Lemony
- **DINOSAUR ROAR!**, Stickland, Paul and Henrietta
- **DON'T LET THE PIGEON DRIVE THE BUS!**, Willems, Mo
- **DR. DOOLITTLE**, Lofting, Hugh
- **THE DOORBELL RANG**, Hutchins, Pat
- **DUCK ON A BIKE**, Shannon, David
- **EPPIE M. SAYS**, Dunrea, Olivier
- **FAIRY TALE COMICS: CLASSIC TALES TOLD BY EXTRAORDINARY CARTOONISTS**, Duffy, Chris, Ed.
- **FIRST STEPS**, Burningham, John

- **FREIGHT TRAIN**, Crews, Donald
- **FIRE TRUCK**, Sís, Peter
- **FREIGHT TRAIN**, Crews, Donald
- **FROGGY GETS DRESSED**, London, Jonathan
- **THE GARDENER**, Stewart, Sarah
- **GEORGE AND MARTHA**, Marshall, James
- **GO AWAY, BIG GREEN MONSTER!**, Emberly, Ed



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