



**Diamante Montessori School**  
Enriching the Person Within Your Child

MARCH 2017

## Alice's Corner

Every school year seems to go by quickly and this year is no exception. We have all been so busy! The children return from winter break and start the New Year ready to accomplish so much in each class! Everyone is settled in and normalization happens! This is a goal of a Montessori teacher! Normalized children who are self-directed, self-disciplined and independent! What a pleasure it is to see. Visitors who come to our school this time of year spend lots of time asking me "how did you get the children to be so busy and independent?" This is one thing I enjoy discussing with prospective parents. We are so fortunate to have teachers at our school who truly respect the children. They allow the children to become who they are naturally and they follow their interests and needs. Even our two year olds are working without much direction from the teachers. Complete work cycles are happening and no one needs to remind them to clean up. We've come a long way since September and with time and patience we always see this develop.

Our re-enrollment is complete and our classes have filled up quickly. We appreciate your confidence in our school as we complete our 15<sup>th</sup> year! We have grown from a small school of 7 children to a school of 70+ students! We have a waitlist for all of our classes and we are so happy to meet the needs of so many children.

February 11<sup>th</sup> was our "I LOVE Diamante" fundraiser and we sure did feel the love! We exceeded our goal of \$10,000 by nearly \$2,000! Besides reaching a financial goal we all hoped to establish a sense of community with our families! We did that and what a fun



night! Thank you so much to Maureen Burk, Sarah Raby, Annette Filwett, Jennifer Blowers, Julia Leadaman and Shawna Daeschler for all their hard work on our fundraising committee. I have to say it was a pleasure working with this group of dedicated parents and they never failed to keep me smiling and on task for our big night.

Another fun way the children help us raise funds is through our Track and Field Day. We hope to get this going in April. The children collect pledges for their events which usually consist of a race around the building, an obstacle course and a game station. Families are encouraged to come by and cheer for their child as they participate.

Conferences are coming this week. We always encourage observation of your child in class. Keep this in mind anytime you wonder what is happening in class. Just call the office to set up an appointment to observe.

*Alice*

## Pre-Primary Class

While attending a Montessori conference recently, we were reminded again of the non-academic goals we strive for in our classroom that we hope each student will begin developing before they leave our environment. These goals that our students take with them as they leave are ones they will use and continue to develop throughout their life. We have observed many examples in our students-your children-of independence, responsible, confident, problem solving, self-discipline, repetition of work, a love of learning among others. Our students have mastered skills that allow them to take care of themselves (especially dressing themselves)-the "I did it myself" look is priceless. They have also mastered skills to take care of their environment-being part of a community and having a responsibility to do a job every day to help out the "community". The students know how to load and empty a dishwasher, fold laundry, sweep up dirt, mop the floors, load a washing machine, and roll rugs beautifully among other responsibilities. Having chores and giving children simple choices is something that can also be practiced at home. Have them help you with



chores, laundry and cooking. Give them simple choices when it comes to what to wear or

what to eat. Responsibility builds independence and being independent builds their confidence. All of these skills our students have mastered demonstrate the importance for a child to have the opportunity to repeat an activity until they have perfected it. Do mistakes happen? Absolutely! They are the greatest teachers. Our students know what to do and where to find the tools they will need to take of an "oopsie" independently. Their self-confidence escalates rapidly the more problem solving they are allowed to do on their own-their faces say it all!

Something else that happens in the classroom is practicing "grace and courtesy". Children are always using phrases like "please and thank you", "excuse me" and they use their words to express their feelings to each other. This also comes from having a sense of community and the older children mentoring the younger children.

We have all heard the phrase "Follow the child". This does not mean that we let them do whatever they want. This means that we should observe them, not get in their way and figure out the things that interest the child, what makes them happy, keeps their attention, and gives them joy. Once you recognize some of their interests you will notice their individual personalities developing.

Also in the classroom, we give the children time to get ready when they come in and time to dress at the end of the day. Time is also an important gift you can give your child. Time to accomplish their chores, time to dress themselves, time to be a child, create and explore the world around them, and time to spend with you.

One of the greatest goals is for everyone to develop a life-long love of learning. Children love



learning about people and places around the world. As they enter the adult world wouldn't it be fun if their career or travels take them to some of those places they put on their maps in the preprimary class? Maybe someone will build or create something that had its beginnings when as a child they worked with the dimensional materials in the sensorial area and they began thinking in 3D. As we observe the development of the non-academic goals for our classroom in our students we see the beginnings of some amazing people. We trust you are observing the same at home.

As a Montessori parent, we hope that you are noticing the independent, responsible and confident child they are becoming.

We also invite you to come and observe your child's classroom.

*Liz, Estrella & Joan*

## Toddler Class

Many wonderful changes happen in the toddler class as the majority of children are approaching age 3! We have many children acting as leaders and mastering counting, sounds, movement and even potty training. We see so much independence we hope everyone is seeing it and encouraging it at



home.

We are setting the table, cleaning our place after snack, preparing the bread and slicing our snack, pouring our own water, washing hands – which takes lots of steps – and completing our work cycle by cleaning up and returning our works to their proper place on the shelf. This year we have

more than a few children zipping their own jackets! All these skills are basic to children in a Montessori classroom. The teachers in the class are not needed to aid the children but to guide them to the next developmentally appropriate work! Two to three year olds are mastering themselves in their environment. Learning to move without dropping things, carrying things carefully and choosing what's interesting are all an important part of their development. A carefully prepared environment allows the children to work on things that are fun but also develop strengths they need later. Our flashlight work develops hand and finger strength as well as focus and concentration. They have so much fun when they put all the parts of the flashlight together and get the batteries in correctly and see the light come on. It's not an easy task! They observe each other and can't wait to have a turn. Putting toothpicks in a cheese shaker jar is another simple task to adults but it developed eye hand co-

ordination and concentration as well as finger strength.

These past few weeks we have seen the children need less and less from the adults in the class room! Miss Joan can direct music class without reminding the children to follow along. She often asks the children for ideas on how they can play an instrument or do a movement! It's so nice to see their confidence growing. Group participation can be intimidating for some children but by this time of year they are comfortable in their environment and participating more.

We are excited to see the weather warm up and enjoy more time outside. There are always fun things to see and do in our playground as well as our back lot. We are all looking for robins to return. After a long time inside we are excited to spend more time outside soon.

*Alice and Teese*



## Keeping Busy...



# Enrichment

Igneous, sedimentary, metamorphic, agates, geodes, fossils are words related to our recent study of rocks. The students learned how rocks are made and the importance rocks play in telling us about our Earth's history. The students were able to see and hold a variety of rocks including a fossil of an extinct animal. We completed our study by visiting the Lizzadro Museum of Lapidary Art to view their impressive collections and displays. This study also introduced the students to alphabetizing as they completed an assignment related to the lesson each day.

For our next science study we learned about the Sun-what it is and what it gives us. The students compiled a book by completing a page after each lesson. This study has lead into our current study of the Solar System. The students are learning about what makes up our Solar System and what the different planets are like. Each student is painting their own Solar System along with completing assignments to create a



book. We will visit a planetarium to follow up our study.

Our class has read from a journal written by an artist/journalist who traveled to Antarctica for four months. This was an introduction to the study of Antarctica and the students writing in their own journal. Each week the students are responsible for copying the date from the board into their journal and then writing about anything they want to. One of the goals for this work is to practice using capital letters and punctuation correctly.

Writing stories and letters to classmates, reading books, completing winter related language and math works, roll writing, calendar writing, playing math and cooperative games continue to fill our days. Asia has been our most recent geography study and everyone enjoyed an Asian lunch for Valentine's Day. The students had fun trying to eat with chopsticks and writing Chinese numbers and characters as a part of this study. Australia will be our next study.

Learning time management is one of the overall goals for the enrichment class. At this point in the school year we are observing the students completing assignments related to our geography and science studies, staying current in completing a monthly calendar, and writing weekly in their journal with very little reminders. They are becoming very independent, responsible students with a great work cycle and love of learning.

*Liz & Teese*

# Calendar

**March 8 - Vision and Hearing Screening for all children 3 years old and up.**

**March 8 - Deposits are due for the 2017-2018 school year.**

**March 10-13 - Conferences - on line sign up. NO SCHOOL.**

**March 27-31 - Spring Break, NO SCHOOL.**

**April 14 - Good Friday, NO SCHOOL**

## Quote of the Month

From Dominic in Enrichment:

"I am liven a grat lif"

("I am living a great life.")

## Diamante Staff

### Alice Lewaniak

Head Directress & Toddler Directress

### Liz Thorwall

AM Pre-Primary Co-Directress & Enrichment Directress

### Estrella Lottich

AM Pre-Primary Co-Directress & PM Pre-Primary Directress

### Teese Leadaman

Toddler Class Assistant & Enrichment Assistant

### Joan Curtis

PM Pre-Primary Class Assistant

### Jeri Shaw

Office Manager & Enrichment Lunch Buddy

### Tom Lewaniak

Business Manager

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Diamante Montessori is a not-for-profit organization..