



Diamante Montessori School
Enriching the Person Within Your Child

NOVEMBER 2017

Alice's Corner

We are so excited and proud to celebrate Diamante's 15th anniversary! We're estimating that about 400 families and 1,000 children have come through our school in 15 years. We are planning to celebrate sometime in May with a huge reunion of former and current students and families. Details are being worked on now. More information will be coming.

We are overwhelmed and grateful for all the volunteers we've had this year. Our biggest and best Fun Run happened in October and it all came together with the help of Lauren Zaben, Erica Menocci and Melissa Ezzell. We raised over \$6000 and can now upgrade some outside toys and classroom works for our students as well as funding extra programs for our students.

So far we have scheduled these performances: Chris Fascione will be telling stories to our preprimary students on November 14th. Rachel Weaver will be coming this January to do a special art presentation for our older students and Peg Lehman will perform music for our toddlers this December. There are lots of fun events to look forward to thanks to all our students and families who donated to this year's Fun Run.



Each class at Diamante has settled into the daily routine and we are already seeing so many big works! Everyday the children come in happy and eager to be in class. Our youngest students have shown so much growth already. They have a routine of setting the table, cleaning their place after snack time, changing their shoes and handling the bathroom all on their own! It's a joy to see.

The holidays will be here soon. The Preprimary class is practicing hard for the annual holiday play. This is a big undertaking, but we all enjoy working with the children. Mark your calendars for Wednesday, December 13th at 7:00 at St. Marks' Episcopal Church on Main and Hillside. Details will come home from classroom teachers.

We are looking forward to a wonderful year. We appreciate the support from all of our families as we work together to make this year the best!

Pre-Primary Class

One of the most exciting areas in our classroom especially at the beginning of the school year is the area of Practical Life. As the name implies the students are learning practical (usable) life skills. Maria Montessori observed how much the children she was in charge of wanted to learn about self-care and taking care of their environment and so the area of Practical Life exists in every Montessori classroom. Each practical life work has a beginning-take out the work, middle-do the work, and ending-make the work beautiful for the next person who does it. This process develops a student's work cycle. The works also develop concentration and independence in addition to teaching a life skill.

In our classroom the students have been practicing self-care as they take care of their physical needs. When they are hungry they can fix themselves a snack. The whole process for getting a snack can take up to 45 minutes for a student. It requires putting their name card on the snack table, hand washing, serving themselves, eating in a group setting using polite conversation and cleaning up-washing their dishes. Most of these



skills are ones that they can practice at home at family meal times or as they eat out in a restaurant setting. Each child has also learned how to get themselves a drink of water when they are thirsty. At home you can provide a small pitcher and cups that your child can manage and have them in a place where they can access them at any time they are thirsty. (Also provide some rags and a bucket to put wet rags into when they spill so they can have a sense of responsibility, independence and accomplishment in cleaning up on their own.) Soon you will see them getting drinks for friends, siblings or maybe you! The pride of accomplishment and independence-"I did it!"-is priceless! Everyone can also put on their shoes/slippers and their coat. Many students know how to zip and are helping other students with zipping creating a sense of community and observing others' needs.

A lot of water works are happening in our classroom and everyone knows how to take care of a spill-we have a lot of them! It's simple-get a blue towel, wipe it up and put the towel in the dirty towel container. Not only does this activity get the physical spill taken care of but it's also developing a sense of responsibility-no adult has to tell them what or how to do it-and a sense of accomplishment-doing it themselves, increasing their self esteem and confidence so that they are willing to try new activities. Sweeping, dusting, vacuuming, loading and unloading the dishwasher, loading the washing machine, folding towels, polishing objects are some of the jobs that the students are doing in the classroom. They love helping! At



home when given the tools they need to work you are equipping them for life and giving them the ability to take care of things on their own. It's exciting to see happen and nice as they get older not to be doing the same things you were doing for them when they were three!

Here is a quote from Ann Landers-"It is not what you do for your children but what you have taught them to do for themselves that will make them successful human beings." It's what Maria Montessori observed and said almost 100 years ago!

Liz, Estrella & Joan

Toddler Class

Autumn is such a wonderful time of year in class. Outside we are enjoying the beautiful colors of the changing foliage and we love full use of our playground. The children enjoy working outside in the sand box, carrying heavy things such as the toy trucks, using the balance beam and climbing on the tunnel.

The classroom is starting to settle and our toddlers are starting to enjoy our sense of community. Our children have adjusted nicely and our classroom routines are being established appealing to the child's strong sense of order. In the morning, each child unzips and hangs up their



own coat using a hanger. Afterwards, they change out of their shoes into their inside shoes.

Water activities are always a favorite! Using the hand washing stand requires many steps. It takes concentration to carry the pitcher of water without spilling. Also, while watering the plants, the child learns how to hold the watering can: one on the handle and one on the spout, carefully guiding the spout to each plant. The toddlers are developing self-mastery as they learn control of movement.

Carrying a tray, walking around a rug, rolling a rug, placing work back on the shelf, all require control of movement.

Our toddlers love setting the table. Academically, they are learning and applying one to one correspondence. First, the placemats, then the plates, then the forks and finally the cups. Using walking feet and handling fragile objects with great care. In class, we use beautiful glass plates and cups, showing great respect for the child's abilities.

There is a busy hum in our classroom as children are engrossed in their work! There is beautiful concentration! Our toddlers love caring for our environment. Some of our toddlers really enjoy scrubbing: they enjoy making a rich lather scrubbing in large circles, waiting for the bubbles to form. Some children love polishing. We also have polishing. The children love to apply polish and use a timer to wait for the polish to dry before using a polishing mitt to take off the polish. When they polish in small circles, it's an indirect preparation for writing. Another child is always the first to notice if there is a spill and love to use the mop. Always, there is a contentment or sense of accomplishment after finishing their work!

Food preparation and baking happens so much in our class. Our toddlers love being bakers and chefs. We love making our bread from scratch. We pre-measure everything, so the baker is very independent in making the dough: first scooping out the flour, then adding some sugar, oil, yeast and water. We then knead the dough and wait for it to rise. Afterwards, another child might be interested in rolling biscuits.

Our chefs enjoy slicing different fruits. We are very respectful and careful using kitchen tools such as our child knives. We love slicing

BABY BOOM!

Liam in the PM Class welcomed twin brothers, Jack and Owen, in August. Congratulations to Marie & Tyler.

Jack in the AM Class has a new brother, Luke, who was born in September. Congratulations to Lauren & Brian.

Payton in the AM class has a new brother and sister, Jonathan and Harper. Congratulations to Shawna & Jeff.

Gus in the Toddler Class is a excited to be a big brother to George. Congratulations to Julia & Blake.

cantaloupe, pears and grapes. Sometimes we scrub, slice and then bake potatoes.

At home, allow enough time for your child to develop in their independence. Remove or change any obstacles to their independence. Having things in their height or simplifying the environment helps. Giving them choices each morning is helpful in their growing sense of help. Making sure the clothes are easy for them to independently dress. We look forward to our toddlers blossoming and the rest of the year!

Maria & Teese

TODDLER QUOTE OF THE MONTH:
"I'm happy!"

Keeping Busy...



Enrichment

The Enrichment class has gotten off to a very busy start. These students, many of whom have been in Montessori since they were toddlers, have developed through their Montessori experience a strong sense of order in their work, independence in completing works, responsibility, an extended concentration span which they need to be able to complete long works.

One of the goals for the enrichment students is working on time management. A group presentation is given along with an assignment, which is then put on a shelf. The students are responsible for completing the assignment while also doing the fun games and works in the room. Currently the assignments relate to our study of North America and the United States including its history. Some of the projects include completing a map of North America, coloring flags of various countries, decoding a picture sentence, unscrambling the words to a sentence and writing it. As they complete an assignment they mark it off a check off paper in their North America folder. When all the assignments have been checked off

their folder goes home. The look of pride and excitement on the students' faces as they complete a folder is priceless!

Practicing math problems, color word recognition works, doing sound works, writing stories and reading books also fill our days. As the students have completed various works we have observed that their cutting, writing and reading skills are improving. They are taking pride in their work and they love to share completed works with their peers!

Our class looked at the book, *Look What I Did With A Leaf*, then went outside and collected leaves of various sizes, shapes and colors. Using the collected leaves, which had been pressed, the students came up with their own leaf creations and glued them to a piece of paper to take home. The variety and creativeness reflected in the creations was wonderful to see.

The class enjoyed a "Mexican" Halloween lunch since we have been talking about North America and Mexico. They are looking forward to preparing a Harvest Feast for a Thanksgiving lunch. They still enjoy practicing their practical life skills and the refinement of those skills is very evident.

Liz & Teese

Enrichment Quote of the month:

"Do you miss Miss Estrella?"

"I love preschool!"

CALENDAR

Nov. 14 – Chris Fascione – PM arrives early with lunch. AM brings lunch and dismisses at 1:15 pm. 3 year old Toddlers bring lunch and stay. Dismiss at 1:00 pm.

Nov. 20-24 – No School, Thanksgiving Break!

Dec. 11 – Rehearsal for all Preprimary students at St. Mark's. Details to come from classroom teachers.

Dec. 13 – 3 day Toddlers Holiday Performance in class. 9:15 am

Preprimary Class play – The Wide Mouth Frog! At St. Mark's 7:00 pm

Dec. 14 – 2 day Toddlers Holiday Performance in class . 9:15 am

Dec. 20 – Enrichment Holiday Performance in class. 1:00 pm.

Dec. 25 – Jan. 5 – No School Winter Break.



Diamante Staff

Alice Lewaniak

Head Directress

Liz Thorwall

AM Pre-Primary Co-Directress & Enrichment Directress

Estrella Lottich

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

Maria DeVeyra

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