

*Inspiring a Healthy Spirit, a Strong Character, and a Clear Intellect*



# BLUEBIRD BULLETIN

FEBRUARY 2011 VOLUME 37, ISSUE 6

© Montessori in Redlands, LIC# 360910803-4-5

## What's Inside...

**PTM News and Notes** ..... 2  
 Purpose of PTM  
 PTM Supports Gala with New Item  
 Thank you for Annual Fund support

**Report from the Board** ..... 3  
 Security Updates  
**Curriculum Matters** ..... 3  
 Waves of Work  
**Bluebird Assembly: Celebrating the Peacemakers** . . . . 4  
 Children celebrate Martin Luther King, Jr.:

Transcripts of skits written and performed by Elementary students  
**Get ready for a little make believe and a lot of fun!** ..... 8  
 MIR Spring Gala & Auction



**JOURNEY & DISCOVERY**  
 "Follow the child."  
**Saturday, Feb. 26**  
 Time: 8 AM-2 PM  
 RSVP BY FEB. 25



## The Elementary Child

by MAURA JOYCE, HEAD OF SCHOOL

This month, as I prepare to meet with parents whose children are getting ready to move to the Elementary program, I thought it would be prudent to talk about the Elementary-aged child and how their needs are met in a Montessori environment. As I have done in previous years, this month I hand over my article to Baiba Krumins Grazzini, Director of Training at the AMI Elementary training center in Bergamo, Italy. The training center celebrated its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2010.

For most parents, Montessori is vastly different from our own educational experience. So naturally, we have many questions. For some the questions are simple: "What is a metal inset? What do they do with a checkerboard?" For others the questions are more profound: "Where should my child go to school? Should they continue in Montessori as they reach the next step in their education?"

MIR and The Grove School invite you to join us for the semi-annual *Journey & Discovery* to help you answer these questions.

*(Continued on page 7)*

Let us now examine the second plane [phase] of development...and consider the different aspects of the child of 6 to 12: intellectual, moral, social, and emotional.

Montessori...says that, during the years 6 to 12 there exists a sensitive period for culture. We interpret Montessori's *culture* as *knowledge and understanding*. These children are seeking knowledge and understanding... of the world and how the world functions, and of human society and how human society functions. It is during this plane that the mind reaches a more abstract level of thinking, of questioning, of reasoning. Montessori says this is when the abstract plane of the mind is organized...[children] are looking for mental independence—they want to

think for themselves, reason things out for themselves, work things out for themselves. And they want to do all this in the context of a reality which is largely out of physical reach and has to be seen mentally. What stands out above all else, says Montessori, is the hungry mind, the mind that is hungry for *knowledge and understanding*.

With regard to morality, we know children are developing a conscience, a sense of what is right and what is wrong, a sense of fairness, etc. Montessori says that this, too, is a sensitive period during the second plane and with regard to this, the adults must be especially careful because here is where the

*(Continued on page 2)*



## A little bird told me...PTM News and Notes

### Purpose of the PTM

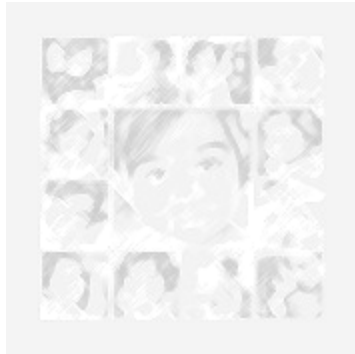
We thought that this month we could take a moment to describe the purpose of Parents and Teachers of Montessori (PTM). PTM has four main functions:

- To increase parent involvement in the school
- To educate parents on Montessori theory and practice
- To encourage communication among the school staff, the Board, and parents
- To nurture a sense of community at Montessori in Redlands

PTM is like the PTA (Parent Teachers Association) organizations at other schools. We hold several events each year,

including the Halloween and Spring Carnivals and Camp Montessori. We work to create ways for students, parents, and teachers to socialize, get to know each other, and learn from each other. We also continue to look for ways to be involved in our local community, such as through food and toy drives.

We hold monthly meetings at which we organize our activities, plan events, create a network of parent support, and connect with the MIR administration. All parents are invited. The next PTM meeting is Thursday April 7 at 6 PM. Please feel free to join us anytime.



### PTM Supports Spring Gala with New Auction Item

PTM is thrilled to announce our auction item for the Spring Gala & Auction on March 5: Cheryl Thomas will personalize a multi-level photographic journey of your child's day at MIR. This customized black and white, sepia, or colored photography collection will be yours to enjoy as a family heirloom for years to come. This auction item is open to everyone. We hope to see you all at the Gala!

### Thank You for Your Time and Support of the MIR Annual Fund

The PTM board would like to thank all the room reps for their dedication to the MIR Annual Fund. Without your help the Annual Fund would not have achieved such a great participation rate.

PTM also thanks each and every family that donated or pledged to the MIR Annual Fund in support of the classroom participation program. We and the teachers are grateful to you for your efforts to help each class reach its goals—thanks to you, the program was a wonderful success for many classes.

### ELEM. CHILD (*cont.*)

(Continued from page 1)

children are particularly vulnerable and sensitive.

Socially speaking, these children are more interested in their peers, and they build what Montessori calls a practice society. This is not an adult society as we know it, which is what the adolescents are trying to live. But it is

what we may well call a practice society: it has its agreed-upon community rules, with people abiding by the rules; it has its work that is shared, with children collaborating together in their work. Montessori points out how association of this kind brings new strength and stimulates new energies' and that it helps with the process of thinking and understanding, as well as with

action and physical work.

Emotionally speaking, what is important is self-respect or self-esteem (which) always depends on being able to do for oneself, think for oneself, decide for oneself. It has to do with independence, knowing that you have capacities and competencies; that you can contribute and help others rather than always needing help from others.

### MIR News and Notes

#### *Staff news*

Educational Consultant Larissa Jefferson begins maternity leave this month as she is scheduled to deliver her 4th child. Larissa will return in April to continue her work with the children and the Special Needs team. Congratulations Larissa!

### MIR to Outline New Security Measures at Parent Meeting

MIR will host a parent meeting on Thursday, February 10 at 6:30 PM to outline new security measures. These plans were arrived at after consulting with the Redlands Police Department to ensure that any new measures are truly effective at improving security. We received many suggestions from parents, which we discussed with the RPD. This meeting will provide parents the opportunity to hear our plans and ask questions you may have about campus security.

## Report from the Board

by TREVOR NORTON, BOARD MEMBER

### Security Updates

As Chair of the Facilities and Tech Committee of the Board of Trustees, our meetings this month have focused on campus security. Last month's car theft was troublesome, to say the least, and we have been analyzing the best approach to address the issue. After consulting with members of the Redlands Police Department (RPD), discussing with staff, listening to parents, and meeting as a board, we have identified several strategies to help us limit our exposure to risk.

First and foremost, the RPD pointed out the difference between the theft—a property crime—and violent crime. The RPD also affirmed all the things that we already do to keep the children personally safe while at MIR:

- Children are signed in and out of school by their parents.
- Children are not allowed out of the teacher's or staff sight at any time.
- Children are not permitted to be on campus after school without a parent, unless they are in our after-care programs.
- Visitors to our campus are not permitted to be here or hang around MIR or its students unless they are under the direct supervision of a MIR staff member. All visitors are signed in at the office.

In addressing the recent car theft, we recognize that parents would feel more reassured if they could see immediate changes to improve security. However, the job of the administration as well as the Board and its committees is to make decisions and implement strategies that will address the problem and *make a difference*. Reaction to this incident could be very swift, but logic and reason suggest a more methodical approach and this, for better or worse, takes time.

Here is a timeline of MIR's actions since the car theft:

#### January 10

- Car theft incident
- Note to parents distributed
- Initial administration and Board discussions

January 11: Update email to parents regarding proposed

*(Continued on page 7)*



## Curriculum Matters

By PETER DAVIDSON,  
ASSISTANT HEAD OF SCHOOL

*"Education is not something which the teacher does. It is a natural process which develops spontaneously."—Maria Montessori*

### Waves of Work

If you attended the recent parent night on "Creativity" you undoubtedly noticed the scale models of the Parthenon and Mission Church displayed on the table in the back of the room. I mention them here not only as prime examples of the children's creativity, but also as examples of the surprising way that creative projects such as these can catch on in a Montessori classroom, sparking a sudden interest in similar projects and spinning off numerous variations on a common theme. I think of this sudden contagious spreading of projects, ideas, and enthusiasms as "waves of work."



*The scale model of the mission that started the "wave of work."*

In this particular case the wave started with an older student's idea to build a scale model of a mission she was researching as part of her study of California history. I can just picture her gathering the cardboard, cutting the shapes, and assembling them with glue and tape. As the model began to take shape, it apparently caught the attention of some younger students who were researching Greek history and mythology, inspiring them to build a scale model also, but of the Parthenon. As is typical with these waves of work, each individual or group adds something of their own creativity and personality to make the project

*(Continued on page 6)*

# Bluebird Assembly: Celebrating the Peacemakers

The Bluebird assemblies that happen each month are an opportunity for all the students of the school to come together, from the smallest to the tallest. The assemblies are run by designated classes and include the Pledge of Allegiance, birthday acknowledgements, and school announcements. For each assembly, the designated class presents on a famous “peacemaker,” a historical figure who devoted their lives to promoting peace. Students select the peacemaker, research his or her history, and create the presentation, which often takes creative forms.

Martin Luther King, Jr., was the subject of the assembly on Friday, January 21, following the holiday in his honor. Margaretann and Nicole’s Upper Elementary students assembled a series of presentations and skits that offered vignettes into his life and highlights of major civil rights events. The students wore either white shirts or black shirts to act out the vignettes, and the audience was rapt. This was a particularly affecting assembly, and the students’ written work is shared here.

## MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. SKITS

### *Before the segregation skit*

(Said by Maia) Martin Luther King Jr. was born in Atlanta, Georgia. His minister father combined religion with a sense of social justice. Throughout the southern U.S. Racial segregation had been the law. Black people were not allowed to go to the same schools, live in the same neighborhoods, or even drink from the same water fountains as whites. King's loving family protected him from some kinds of racism and made sure he knew he was equal in worth to anyone else. Still, he grew up thinking the worst of white people, many of whom treated blacks with contempt, or even cruelty.

(Said by Isabel) Not until King went to college in the north did he realize that not all white people were racist. He decided that southern racism was kept alive by unjust laws that had to be changed. Then racist white people could overcome their mistaken attitudes. Blacks were already making some gains: in 1954, for example, the U.S. Supreme Court would declare school segregation illegal.

### Segregation Skit

By Kyrellos Ibrahim

Jim (Kyrellos): Here we are in 1954; the Supreme Court Justice has just declared segregated schools illegal. Nine black girls are prevented from going up the steps of their new school by governor sent policemen.

Joe (Sydney): Yep that's what I heard, Jim. When the governor sent the police to block the girls from going to school, President Eisenhower had to send the National Guard to escort them up the steps because the governor refused to let them in.

Jim: That's right, Joe. When he refused, he was immediately removed from office.

Joe: So there you have it: nine girls prevented from going to school because of the old ways of thinking  
(*Characters act out what narrators are saying*)

### Rosa Parks Skit

By Kyrellos Ibrahim

### *Before the skit*

(Said by Jennifer) Soon after he became pastor in Montgomery, Alabama, King was thrust into leadership. An accident in the city sparked a nationwide civil rights movement. When riding on Montgomery buses, blacks could only sit in the back, and they had to give up their seats to whites on demand.

Narrator (Abbey): In 1955, four white people got on a bus. The bus was very crowded so one white man was left standing.

Joe (Sydney): From what I have heard the bus driver told a row of black people to move because the Jim Crow laws forbid sitting in the same bus row. Three of them moved but a woman named Rosa Parks refused.

Jim (Kyrellos): That’s right, when she refused to move the police were called. After Rosa Parks was arrested, the black citizens went to Martin Luther King, Jr. and asked him to lead a bus boycott.

Narrator: A boycott is when a group refuses to participate in something; in this case they refused to ride the buses. The boycott lasted for over a year and was taken to the Supreme Court, which declared that segregated buses were illegal.

(*Characters act out what the Narrators are saying during this*)

(Continued on page 5)

(Continued from page 4)

### Greensboro Skit

By Mackenzie Noon

#### *Before Greensboro*

(Said by Anagha) King and his supporters practiced civil disobedience in the name of higher justice. They did not give in to hatred or try to triumph over white people. They believed that this approach would eventually awaken a sense of justice in their oppressors.

Narrator 1 (Jennifer): Here we are at a luncheonette in a bus station in Greensboro.

Joseph (Andrew): May I have some scrambled eggs, a side of bacon, and some toast, please?

Waitress (Savannah): Now you know we're not going to serve you so get out.

Narrator 2 (Maia): Unfortunately, this kind of thing happened a lot to Joseph McNeil and he had gotten used to this kind of treatment.

Narrator 1: That night Joseph and his friends talk about what happened and they decide to do something about it.

Narrator 2: Here we are the next day at the F.W. Woolworth in Greensboro.

Narrator 1: Joseph and his three friends walk in and sit down at the lunch counter.

David (Harrison): Excuse me. Excuse me, miss. May I please see the menu?

Waitress: You have to go over to that counter, standing up.

Ezell (Ben): But we want to be here, sitting down

Franklin (Jonathan): Can I have a sandwich, please?

Waitress: We can't serve you, but we can't make you leave either, so you can sit there all day for all I care.

Narrator 2: That's exactly what they did, until the store closed.

Waitress: Closing time, everyone.

Narrator 1: More than twenty black college students, including the original foursome come pouring into the store and sit down at the lunch counter, occupying all the seats.

Waitress: Oh no!

David: Oh yes!

David: Two waffles, hash-browns, and coffee. Decaf, please.

Joseph: May I have a pancake, please.

Ezell: Sausages and orange juice, please.

Franklin: Can I have the breakfast special, please?

Waitress: I've already told you, we're not going to serve you.

Ezell: Well we're not leaving 'til we're treated fairly!

Narrator 2: And they sat there and sat there, forcing stores to rethink their policies because they were losing money.

(Characters act out what the Narrators are saying during this)

### Speech Skit

By Ben Murphy

#### *Before Speech skit*

(Said by Abbey) For the next thirteen years, King and others led people across the nation in non-violent boycotts, sit-ins, marches, and demonstrations. As the civil rights movement spread, King raised the hopes and pride of black people. His eloquent speeches moved both blacks and whites to join the crusade for civil rights.

Narrator (Ben): Martin Luther King, Jr. led a march on Washington D.C. He followed it by giving a speech at the Lincoln Monument. He only expected 100,000 people; instead there was 250,000 people at the speech. These famous words "I have a dream" came true after his death, sadly.

MLK (Harrison): I have a dream that my four little children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by their skin color, but by the content of their character.



#### *After Speech skit*

(Said by Abbey) King looked for the underlying causes of black powerlessness and poverty. He campaigned for equal education and job opportunities, voter registration, and a sense of black community and pride. King traveled tirelessly working twenty hours a day seven days a week.

#### *Closing*

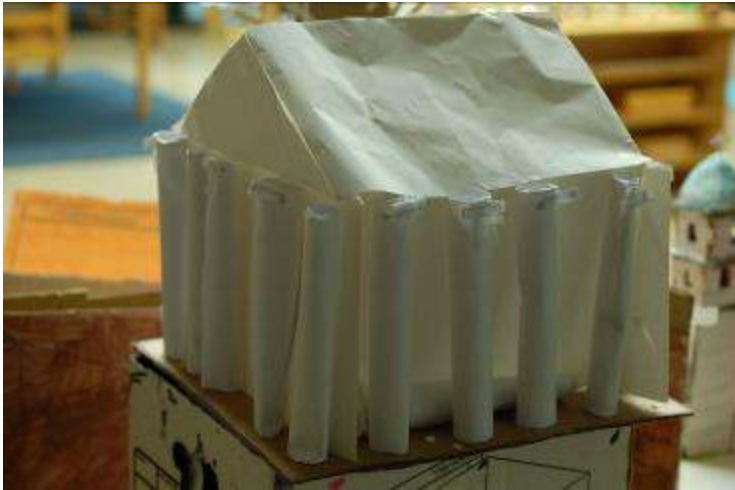
(Said by Harrison) Always the target for hatred, King was assassinated in 1968. But King had never flinched from the violence he knew lay in everyone. He once said, "If you are cut down in a movement that is designed to save the soul of a nation, then no other death could be more redemptive." His dream did not die with him; today, people continue to make his beloved community a reality.

## CURRICULUM MATTERS *(cont.)*

*(Continued from page 3)*

their own rather than merely copying the original that inspired them. In this case, the younger students decided to add Mt. Olympus and a Trojan Horse to the side of the Parthenon, and a diorama of Hades underneath. Ultimately, these additions almost overshadowed the Parthenon model, and clearly demonstrate the amount of ingenuity, creativity, and individuality that went into the project.

What is important to note is that none of this was the teacher's idea. It was her role to allow the time for it to come to fruition, to help them find the necessary raw materials with which to work, and to observe their progress rather than hinder it. The fact that this was truly the students' idea



*The Parthenon. Not shown in the photo is the statue of Athena inside the temple.*

and the students' work goes a long way toward accounting for their enthusiasm, inventiveness, and perseverance.

These "waves of work" are also visible in the Primary classrooms and even the Toddler environments. My wife, Mary, likes to tell a story from her first year as a Primary teacher. In October of that year she had the opportunity to meet with her Trainer and other new teachers. On this occasion she asked a very pointed question of her Trainer. "Why is it," she asked, "that the painting, coloring, cutting and gluing activities in my classroom are in constant use, while the movable alphabet just sits on the shelf gathering dust? I am presenting all kinds of work to the children, but they seem mainly to be attracted to the art activities. Could it be that 'art' is just more fun for the children than the more academic pursuits?" "Not at all," was her Trainer's response. "What you are seeing is a 'wave of work.' Just continue presenting in all areas."

Needless to say, Mary found this answer less than satisfying, but a few days later something strange happened in her classroom: No one painted! Only one child pasted a collage, and she went on after that to trace sandpaper letters for nearly an hour. That day proved to be the beginning of a 3-month-long period during which the language work ran rampant in her classroom. There was an absolute explosion of creative writing with the movable alphabet, an insatiable appetite among several children for the reading exercises, and one after another of the younger children shot through the steps leading up to the beginnings of writing and reading.

During this time, although she dutifully set out paint and paper for the easel, it was rarely touched. She continued



*Mt. Olympus and the Greek battleship. Zeus's lightning bolt operates via a pulley system.*

to present activities of artistic expression, as well as in the math, practical life, sensorial, and cultural areas. While some children certainly worked with these exercises from time to time, most were choosing language work the majority of the time. Eventually that raging fire of language work subsided, leaving glowing embers in its wake. But then another hot-spot ignited and the operations of the decimal system flared up!

Ask any Montessori teacher and they will tell you about the waves of work they have experienced in their classrooms. A primary teacher will tell you about a time when a wave of practical life swept her classroom and for a period of weeks she had the world's cleanest and shiniest tables, chairs, shelves, windows, shoes and silver. An elementary teacher will tell you how one student's enthusiasm for writ-

*(Continued on page 7)*

## BOARD REPORT (*cont.*)

(Continued from page 3)

steps to determine actions

*January 15:* Meeting with Head of School and RPD regarding security measures and options

*January 20:* Facilities committee meeting to report RPD suggestions and discuss viable options

*January 24:* Board meeting to discuss Facilities Committee recommendations

*January 28:* Staff in-service day: gather input from staff about suggested security measures

*February 4:* Security issues addressed to parents in *Bluebird Bulletin*

While the timeline may seem long, as the police advised, MIR needs to make sure to implement effective measures, not reactionary ones. The following are some of the changes and actions already being implemented:

- Additional staff on parking lot duty during drop-off and pick-up times
- Continued education of staff and parents about reducing the risk by removing the opportunity for theft
- Additional speed bumps will be added to parking lots to slow all traffic
- Increased lighting throughout campus
- Skirting of trees to increase visibility to the street
- Request submitted to RPD for increased patrols

Two longer-term suggestions being considered by the Board and administration include

- Tire treadle strips (one-way “do not back up” spikes) on driveway exits to prevent cars going in the wrong way (both recent incidents at MIR involved cars entering the wrong way)
- Security cameras

Of the above, what the RPD stressed as most important to improving security was educating parents and staff. We all need to work together to reduce risk. The “smash-and-grab” criminals look through all the parking lots in Redlands. The more often that they see an opportunity, the more often they will return. Again, if we make sure to lock our cars and leave nothing desirable out in the open, we limit our exposure to risk.

We invite all of you with continuing concerns or questions about campus security to join us for an open forum next Thursday, February 10 at 6:30 PM. Board members, administration, and staff will be on hand to answer your questions.

For questions about the Board or questions related to school governance, contact

Leela MadhavaRau

President, Board of Trustees

[leela\\_madhavarau@redlands.edu](mailto:leela_madhavarau@redlands.edu)

(909) 748-8285 (work)

## CURRICULUM MATTERS (*cont.*)

(Continued from page 6)

ing will set off an avalanche of stories, or plays, or poetry. Or, on another occasion, one student’s enthusiasm for calculating the longest long division problem he could think of spawned a whole generation of enormous math problems, with children inventively taping together sheet after sheet of graph paper to contain them.

But what factors in a Montessori classroom account for this phenomenon? First, the mixed age span, where younger children are inspired by the work of older children and vice versa; second, the size of the group allowing for a rich variety of personalities and interests. But most importantly, it is because we provide the children with the time and freedom to allow their natural spontaneous curiosity and inventiveness to arise. The spark that sets it all off can be just one child’s discovery or sudden flash of insight. No teacher-generated project can ever hold a candle to the power and enthusiasm of that which arises from the children themselves.

## JOURNEY & DISCOVERY (*cont.*)

(Continued from page 1)

This full-day seminar offers a thorough look at Montessori education from toddlers to teenagers. The day starts with a **journey** through classrooms spanning the entire Montessori curriculum from Toddlers to 18 years. Parents will then split into the group of their choice to fully **discover** the curriculum for Toddlers to 6th grade, or 1st grade through 12th grade. This second half will include hands-on learning and an opportunity to talk with teachers at all levels about what happens in the classroom each day.

*Journey & Discovery* will be held Saturday, February 26, 8 AM–2 PM. Lunch will be served. Please **RSVP by Friday, February 25** online, in the office, or call 909-793-6989. Space is limited. Learn more at [montessoriinredlands.org/journey](http://montessoriinredlands.org/journey).

# BIRTHDAYS



## students

Evan Hill	2/2
Lauren Reiter	2/2
Demiana Ibrahim	2/4
Rishabh Bajaj	2/6
Cole Fisher	2/7
Caden Minami	2/7
Ellie Zhang	2/9
Alicia Perez	2/12
Sebastien Genet-Egry	2/13
Abhinav Pidaparathi	2/14
Nathaniel Ortega	2/15
Noor Sherzai	2/15
Karly Lundgren	2/19
Elena Forristall	2/20
Sydney Agrawal	2/21
Rylie Grames	2/22
Aurora Simon	2/22
Francesco Argentina	2/24
Jonathan Gervais	2/25
Ryan Mickelson	2/27
Brooke Bodnar	2/27
Thu Dang	2/28

## staff

Maria Hernandez	2/13
Jennifer Avegno	2/23

 **TWEET:** [twitter.com/mirmatters](https://twitter.com/mirmatters)

Bluebird Bulletin is published by Montessori in Redlands, 1890 Orange Ave., Redlands, CA 92373, License number 360910803-4-5. © 2011. Submit articles, pictures, or comments to [lisa.kensok@montessoriinredlands.org](mailto:lisa.kensok@montessoriinredlands.org) or bring them to the MIR office.

# GET READY FOR A LITTLE MAKE BELIEVE AND A LOT OF FUN!



Join MIR for the 14th Annual Spring Gala & Auction, an evening of fine food, drink, dancing, and a surprise or two. This is no princess ball—be prepared for a raucous good time. Just beware the beanstalks.



The highlight of the night will be our live auction hosted by Martha Green and featuring one-of-a-kind, hand-crafted items

created by the children. Come to enjoy a magical evening and find a few gems to enjoy ever after!

**RSVP by February 11** for the early bird ticket prices of \$65 each. Tickets are \$75 after that date. Look for invitations in the mail and more information in your parent folder as we get closer to the event.

There are also opportunities to advertise, sponsor the event, and donate goods for the silent auction. Talk to Jill McDermott in the office if you are interested.

## FEBRUARY 2011

<b>31</b>	<b>1</b> Elem soccer clinic, 3:45-4:45 PM Lango classes	<b>2</b>  Jean/MH fieldtrip to Folk Music Ctr <b>Sir Ken @ UofR, 7 pm</b>	<b>3</b> Maria's class trip to the theater Elem soccer clinic, 3:45-4:45 PM Lango classes	<b>4</b>
<b>7</b> Childcare reservation deadline for President's Day	<b>8</b> Kara/Dorama to the Living Desert Elem soccer clinic, 3:45- 4:45 PM Lango classes (new session)	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b> Elem soccer clinic, 3:45-4:45 PM Lango classes Parent meeting, 6:30 PM	<b>11</b> Coffee, Tea, and M.E., 9:15
<b>14</b>  Emily/Teesie's trip to Braswell's/Olive Grdn	<b>15</b> Lango classes	<b>16</b>	<b>17</b> Elem soccer clinic, 3:45-4:45 PM Lango classes	<b>18</b> President's Day—no school; childcare by reservation.
<b>21</b> Washington's birth- day. No school; no childcare.	<b>22</b> Elem soccer clinic, 3:45-4:45 PM Lango classes	<b>23</b>	<b>24</b> Elem soccer clinic, 3:45-4:45 PM Lango classes	<b>25/26</b> Bluebird assembly, 9:15 AM  <b>JOURNEY &amp; DISCOVERY, 8 AM-2 PM</b>
<b>28</b>	<b>1</b> <b>Early registration begins</b> Elem soccer clinic, 3:45-4:45 PM Lango classes	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b> Elem soccer clinic, 3:45-4:45 PM Lango classes	<b>4/5</b> <b>MIR SPRING GALA &amp; AUCTION, 6 PM-12 AM</b> 