

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



BLUEBIRD BULLETIN

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Parent-Infant Class to Start April 4



MIR will host a 4-week Parent-Infant Class for children from six weeks to 17 months and their parents. The goal of the class is to assist with the child's development through small-group interaction. Parents will learn how to observe, support, and encourage the child's natural development.

Special materials and furniture provided for the class will aid the infant with movement, hand/eye coordination, and the development of the senses. The teacher acts as the link between the prepared environment and the children, helping to provide experiences within the environment. These experiences

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Welcome Spring...Summer is Around the Corner!

by SARA GARCIA, PRIMARY TEACHER

"Order is one of the needs of life which, when it is satisfied, produces a real happiness."—Maria Montessori

Birds are singing, bees are buzzing, trees are blooming, children are laughing, here at MIR spring has really sprung! I think it's safe to say that we have all successfully leapt into spring and all of our body clocks have (hopefully) adjusted to their spring timing. With the annual bitter-sweet act of changing our clocks behind us we have welcomed spring into our lives.

This process does, however, call to our attention the effect that small changes in routine can have on our, and in particular, our children's lives. Some transitions, though welcomed, can be hard! Changing bedtimes, taking trips, making seasonal wardrobe changes can all lead to meltdowns that can seem to adults unnecessary or unreasonable.

The need for consistency in so many areas of our children's lives is essential.

Consistency in routine really provides our children with a sense of security. It is truly a gift to provide a child with a consistent and predictable environment. For children here at MIR, we respond to the need for consistency by providing three year cycles so that children can really relax and trust their environment and community. This creates ideal conditions for learning and reaching their optimal potential. A lack of consistency can often make children feel insecure and even chaotic. A lack of routine can create anxiety. When children function within a predictable routine, they can master daily tasks and feel safe in the world. Consistency facilitates the child's development of self.

With summer just 11 weeks away, it is already time to start making plans. For

(Continued on page 6)



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

Spring Gala is a Success Thanks to Parents and Staff by VANESSA LESLIE, PTM PRESIDENT

Thanks to all the parents and staff who made the Spring Gala such a success!! We are happy to report that the PTM-sponsored item sold for \$1,000 at the Gala. Thank you to the family who purchased this item. We hope you enjoy several relaxing date nights!!

Bring a Smile to Children in Need on Their Birthdays—Donate Birthday Bags 4 Kids

Starting Monday, April 2, PTM is collecting gift bags for Birthday Bags 4 Kids, an organization that provides toy-filled birthday gift bags to children who may be homeless, at-risk, low-income, foster children, or whose families are experiencing extreme financial hardship. The organization usually delivers 50-60 birthday gift bags each month.

If every family at MIR provided just one gift bag, we would exceed their monthly goal and make it possible for the organization to deliver even more bags! To donate, purchase new, age-appropriate gifts for children ages 1-18 (no used items). Please include a birthday bag and tissue paper. Suggested items include:

Coloring books and crayons, books and games, stickers and bubbles, backpacks and school supplies, balls and kites, craft supplies, small purses and hair accessories, sports-related items, puzzles and small stuffed animals, Slinky's and novelty toys, disposable cameras, gift certificates (Target, Krikorian Theatres, Barnes & Noble—scrip is available at the Farm School 7-9 AM Friday mornings), personal hygiene products (for adolescent age group), perfume.

Collection boxes will be in each classroom or in the office. Thank you in advance for your generosity!

If you would like to donate some of your time to Birthday Bags 4 Kids please call Julie Farquhar at 909-583-7910.

PTM Art Cards Fundraising Program to Take Place April 16–May 8

PTM and Montessori have joined together with FundraiserGreetings once again for our greeting card fundraising program. Parents, staff and students are all encouraged to submit drawings, photos, poems or other artistic items to be created as card fronts. The cards are high quality and come in 15-card or 25-card packs. The artist's name along with the school logo are prominently displayed on the back of these cards. The artist's photo as well as many other options for both the card and envelope are also available. Watch your folder for your FundraiserGreetings packet. Card samples will be available in the front office. For more information you can also go to fundraisergreetings.com.

Forty-five percent of the proceeds will benefit our Montessori community.

Nominate Officers for the PTM Board

Nominations for President and Treasurer for the 2012-13 school year will be accepted April 16-27. Do you know someone who would be a great asset to the PTM board? Nominate them for office or nominate yourself and be sure to get your spot on the upcoming officer ballot. If you're interested but not sure what these positions involve, contact Maura Joyce for more information or talk with Heather Florida about her role as Treasurer. Send nominations to ptmnominations@montessoriinredlands.org.

Join Us for Another Bluebird Family Skate Night on April 6

Please join us for another night of skating and fun on Friday, April 6 at CalSkate in Grand Terrace from 5-7 PM. Tickets are available in the office until 4 PM Friday for \$6 each, or at the door for \$8.

CalSkate will not charge an entrance fee for those children or adults not skating. They do have skates available



Art by Eli Riggins, Christine's Toddler class

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Students of All Ages Discover, Create, and Explore in the MIR Summer Program

Session 1 June 18–29 ☀ Session 2: July 2–July 13
Session 3: July 16–July 27 ☀ Session 4: July 30 –August 10



The MIR **Toddler** Summer Program provides continuity in your child's education and consistency in their environment while providing plenty of summer fun.

Toddlers (ages 18 months to 2 1/2 years) will supplement their Montessori environment with special summer activities including gardening, crafts, and water play. An outing to the San Bernardino County Museum will enhance their summer enjoyment.

Primary-age children (2 1/2 to 6 years) seem like they never stop moving or exploring, and the MIR summer program provides plenty of fun and engaging activities in addition to their regular Montessori program.



Your child will enjoy the consistency of their Montessori environment, supplemented by special summer activities such as cooking, gardening, sporting activities, and an in-depth look at subjects such as sea life and art. Field trips provide opportunities for exploration in the wider world as well as old-fashioned summer fun.

The **Elementary** Summer Program offers classes to suit a whole range of interests, from botany to woodworking to making your own movies to science and camping. The program gives your child an opportunity to discover new skills and talents, explore interests more deeply, and create works of art and science in several classes. Most of all, kids will have fun! **Students may enroll for morning sessions, afternoon sessions, or all day.**

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Curriculum Matters

By PETER DAVIDSON,
ASSISTANT HEAD OF SCHOOL

Building Vocabulary

"There is in a child a special kind of sensitivity which leads him to absorb everything about him, and it is this work of observing and absorbing that alone enables him to adapt himself to life."—Maria Montessori

It's widely accepted by psychologists and educators that children, especially below the age of six, have an amazing ability to learn vocabulary. That's no surprise to the parent of a child who knows the name of every dinosaur, or every breed of horse, or every character in the current Disney movie. Dr. Montessori tells us that this is due to the absorbent quality of the child's mind from birth to six as well as the concurrent period of sensitivity to the acquisition of spoken language. So, how do we take advantage of that in the classroom?

Montessori Toddler and Primary classrooms are rich in every area of learning, but none more so than in the acquisition of vocabulary. Opportunities for increasing a child's vocabulary are literally everywhere.

On the language shelf the child will find exercises specifically devoted to this and called, appropriately enough, Enrichment of Vocabulary. These exercises consist of sets of cards, each set focused upon a different group of things. The sets could be of non-living things such as modes of transportation, tools, kitchen implements, types of clothing, or things you would see along the street. Depending upon the interest and knowledge of the group these categories might be developed further to be quite focused, say on construction equipment (do you know the difference between a backhoe and a front-end loader?), or types of airplanes, or even types of clouds.

Among living things we tend to focus on the two broad classifications of plants and animals. Within plants we will have cards with types of flowers, of fruits, of vegetables or trees and shrubs. Often we will bring in real examples of flowers, fruits and vegetables to create excitement and to keep the knowledge immediate and applicable. Among animals, many classrooms will have sets of cards for insects,

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MIR Scrapbook: Spring Gala



Some of the crazy characters at the auction...



Spring Gala Produces Marvelous Results

Thank you to everyone who attended Chicago, the MIR 15th Annual Spring Gala & Auction. We're not sure what was in the air, but it was a wild party with even wilder results.

After a sumptuous feast served by Fox Event Center, where the Gala was held, auctioneer Sam Neely led the live auction. And what an auction it was...participants responded enthusiastically to the wonderful treasures presented to them, helping MIR raise \$53,000, over \$14,000 more than last year. Total proceeds for the evening, including the live auction, silent auction, and sponsorships, came to \$72,455, over \$13,000 more than last year. Funds will be used to support the school's programs, facilities, teaching staff, and financial aid program.

MIR would like to thank the Spring Gala team and volunteers for making this event possible:

- * Jill McDermott, Chair
- * Jennifer Avegno
- * Sandy Bachar
- * Michel Bellefeuille
- * Camilla Bodnar
- * Lisa Kensok
- * Kathleen Liess
- * Shelley McCarthy
- * Jillian Mueller
- * Lisa Oliver
- * Shawnda Zook

Thanks also goes to all the families and other supporters who generously donated time, goods, and services to make this a fabulous Gala. Most of all, thank you to everyone who gave us such marvelous results!

CURRICULUM MATTERS *(cont.)*

(Continued from page 3)

animals you might find in a tide pool, or any of the vertebrate classifications: fish, amphibians, reptiles, birds, and mammals. And yes, we might have a set of cards for pre-historic animals, as well.

In toddlers these activities often focus on matching card to card and/or card to three-dimensional representation, and then learning the names. By the time a child is in primary matching is not much of a challenge, so the immediate focus is more on learning the vocabulary. This is accomplished by means of what we call a three-period lesson.

In the first period, three cards are isolated and named.

Let's say we have chosen to teach the names of three fish. "This is a mackerel. See how streamlined it is for swimming fast? This is a flounder. It is very flat, isn't it? And this is a garibaldi. Isn't it a pretty orange?"

Period two is about practicing the association of name with card. "Can you show me the mackerel? Please hand me the flounder. Place the garibaldi in the corner of the rug." This second period is critical and is kept varied and fun and continues until the teacher is confident that the child knows all three names solidly. Then comes the third period, when the teacher simply holds up a card and asks, "What is this?" If she has done her job well the child will be able to name each successfully. After this the child will often want to place all of the cards he knows on a rug, adding the cards he learned today to any he learned previously, and play a game of "bring me" with the assistant, where she asks him to bring her whichever fish card she names.

Acquisition of vocabulary isn't restricted to enrichment of vocabulary cards, however. Everything in the room has a name and the children are thirsty to know every one. The exercises of practical life are full of vocabulary (scrub brush, peeler, basin and tongs, for example) as are those of the expression area (easel, watercolor paint, pastel). Even mathematics is full of vocabulary, including the names of

numbers and fractions of numbers, the names of categories of the decimal system, the names of the processes, etc.

But no area of the classroom is richer in vocabulary than the sensorial exercises. Obviously, the child will learn the names of the colors, (primary, secondary and tertiary) but also some 24 two-dimensional geometric shapes (everything from ellipse to rhombus to decagon to acute-angled isosceles triangle) as well as 10 solids (from cube to cylinder to rectangular prism). Children learn the names of the land and water forms (cape and bay, gulf and peninsula, etc.), the names of the continents and oceans, and move on to learn the names of countries of their own continent,

then of other continents and the states of the United States. They can even learn the names of the musical notes of the diatonic and chromatic scales!

Not only do they learn names of shapes and colors and objects of the sensorial materials, they also learn the qualities of thick and thin, long and short, deep and shallow, broad and narrow, large and small, rough and

smooth, light and heavy, sweet and sour and bitter, loud and soft, high and low, long and short, as well as their comparatives and superlatives. And it's all attached to experience. It's enough to make your head spin!

There's no guarantee that every child will learn all of this vocabulary before they leave primary, nor is that our goal although we try our darnedest. Our goal is to make the environment not only rich in vocabulary but also alive with it, to take full advantage of their absorbent minds, and to take in a wealth of correct vocabulary at this critical age.

But what of the elementary child? Although their minds may not be quite as sensitive to vocabulary as when they were younger and they may not absorb it from their environment quite as easily, they are still driven to learn vocabulary by their curiosity and imagination, their conscious application of learning strategies, and their need to communicate, building upon the foundation of experience and nomenclature they laid down in toddlers and primary.



A Tribute to Midge*

By Morgan Stewart



So Midge and me walked to the other side of the hill and we laid out a rug on the grass and we brought a book to read and Midge is going to read it. Then we will see how many stars are in the sky.

"Midge, I like you because you help us with our work and help us with our projects and show us how to do new things. My favorite project is the snowman one. I hope you have a good birthday while I am gone in Kelly's class. I love you Midge."

**Assistant in Jean and Marybelen's class.*

New Soccer Clinics to Start April 4

Coach Liam Muirhead will hold his next set of soccer clinics for children ages 4-5 and ages 6-8. The clinics will be held on Wednesdays. The clinic for 4-5 year olds will start at 3 PM and end at 3:45 PM. The clinic for ages 6-8 will start at 3:30 PM and end at 4:30 PM. Clinics begin on Wednesday, April 4 and end Wednesday, April 25.

SUMMER IS AROUND THE CORNER (cont.)

(Continued from page 1)

some families, this time off is an opportunity to explore the world and cultures through travel. Others may take the time to stay home and others may continue in their work and school schedules but take some time out for summer activities. Whatever the case for your family, providing some touchstones of familiarity can really help. Some consistency will be key in keeping this treasured time enjoyable.

Here at MIR we can make it easy for you by offering you four two-week summer school sessions that give your child the chance to continue their Montessori education in a relaxed fun atmosphere. Within the school setting, we integrate thematic indoor and outdoor experiences. For Primary children, summer school incorporates an awesome swim program that offers your child the opportunity to learn to swim or improve their swimming skills. Toddler children will enjoy summer play in addition to the Montessori program, and many will go on their very first field trip to the San Bernardino County Museum. Elementary children will have the opportunity to learn new, fun subjects in-depth in a familiar setting.

For families planning to travel, we recommend taking the mystery but not the excitement out of your plans by including your child in the preparations and planning of your trips. Having a trip calendar and discussions about the places and events that you will go to gives children something to look forward to but not to fear. Discuss behavior expectations ahead of time and maintain consistent rituals for things like bedtime while you travel.

Things like journaling together each afternoon as you go can enrich your experience together and provide a routine that your child can depend upon. Reflecting upon your summer experiences and talking about what is coming up next is also helpful. Upon returning home try to resume as much of a consistent schedule as possible and elicit your child's help in your activities. Scrapbooking, cleaning camping equipment, packing, and unpacking are all activities your child can be included in.

For those who spend summers at home you can make great use of long summer days incorporating some of your child's usual routine while enjoying time together. We often hear parents say "we had a nice summer but couldn't wait to get back into our routine." It's best to create a summer routine right away that can be more flexible yet still offers consistency. Create a summer calendar or schedule with your child and plan with them the things that they would like to do. It's great to incorporate regular events, like a weekly trip to the library, planning family field trips, and organizing your home environment for the fall. Creating summer rituals together like laying in the grass each day and watching the clouds going by is hardly a waste of time and can be part of your summer routine! Be creative and have fun.

Whatever it is that your family decides to do this summer remember that consistency is key! We wish you much fun this summer wherever you are and take heart that when we move into fall we get to "fall forward" and sleep in!

Tune in to Circus



Join the YMCA of the East Valley and many of your fellow Bluebirds for exciting performances by The Great All-American Y Circus. Performers of all ages will thrill you with circus acts from acrobatics to juggling to unicycling and much more. This is fun for the whole family!

Fridays – May 4, 11, 18 – 7 PM

Saturdays – May 5, 12, 19 – 5 PM

Sundays – May 6, 13, 20 – 3 PM

Tickets – \$14/adults, \$9/youth, (children younger than 3 are free if they sit in an adult's lap during the show). Buy your tickets now at the YMCA.

Location – Roy Coble Gym at the YMCA

PTM NEWS AND NOTES *(cont.)*

(Continued from page 2)

for toddlers as small as size 9 (3-4 year olds). This event is open to all MIR, Farm, and Grove students as well as any friends and family they would like to bring as their guests.

We look forward to seeing all the kids and families enjoying some social time together!

Save the Date for the Annual Spring Carnival

Be sure to join us Saturday, May 5 from 11 AM to 3 PM. It will be a fun-filled day including a bounce house, inflatable obstacle course, classroom game booths, prizes, and more. There will be burgers (veggie and meat), chips, and soda available for purchase at the food booth. Admission is \$10 per family and covers all games and activities.

Parent volunteers are needed. Please sign up in your child's classroom to work for just a half hour during the carnival. This is a fun way to participate in making the Spring Carnival a great day for everyone. Your kids will love to have mommy or daddy work in their classrooms booth!

SUMMER SCHOOL *(cont.)*

(Continued from page 3)

WHO CAN ENROLL

- ☀ The Toddler and Primary summer programs are open to continuing students and to new students registered for the 2012–2013 school year.
- ☀ The Elementary summer program is open to any student age 6 to 12 who has completed first grade.

HOW TO ENROLL/DEADLINES

Registration for current MIR families begins April 2. The deposit for families who register before April 30 is \$100. All families who register after April 30 will be required to pay the full amount of the first session attending at the time of registration. New families may register starting May 1.

To enroll, complete all registration forms and bring them to the office along with your deposit.

- ☀ Childcare is available 7:15–9:00 am for all students, and 5–6 pm for all students except two-day Toddler students.
- ☀ There is no school and no childcare on July 4 and August 13–24. The 2012–2013 school year begins August 27.

BIRTHDAYS



students

- Rhapsody Kawai 4/1
- Rebecca Brennan 4/2
- Elizabeth Meister 4/3
- Emma Phipatanakul 4/3
- Ben Phipatanakul 4/3
- Sophia Sherzai 4/7
- Jacqueline Smith 4/7
- Anjali Carter-Rau 4/9
- Naveen Carter-Rau 4/9
- Aynsley Silliman 4/9
- Gavin Zook 4/9
- Carol Tadros 4/10
- Nilay Mehta 4/13
- Victoria Montaghami 4/14
- Walker Mueller 4/14
- Chidubem Ugochuku 4/14
- Elin Apple 4/16
- Makaila McCarthy 4/17
- William Claffin 4/18
- Audrey Kim 4/19
- Kennedy Henson 4/20
- Emily Chun 4/21
- Quinn Hagglov 4/21
- Aidan Hagglov 4/25
- Alec (A.J.) Munoz 4/27
- Sebastian Gaigg 4/28

staff

- Margaretann Harrison 4/9
- Lacy Loeffler 4/22
- Christine Povero 4/23
- Chantelle Brown 4/25
- Carmen Levesque 4/28
- Sara Garcia 4/29

Spring Picture Day is Thursday, April 5

Dress your child up (if he or she will allow!) and be sure to send them to school with a smile on Thursday, April 5! Children are photographed individually.

Photos will be posted to a secure website for which you will be given a code to access and order the photos you want. Order(s) will be mailed to your home.

Ordering photos benefits your child's education as well; 12% of the proceeds are returned to MIR.

PARENT INFANT CLASS (cont.)

(Continued from page 1)



are designed to require enough effort from the child to be interested and to allow the child to feel successful.

The class concludes with a "parent only" discussion group, which will deepen your appreciation and understanding of your child's stages of

development. The discussion also covers nutrition, the child's environment, and discipline.

The class is open to the public and will be taught by MIR infant and toddler trained teacher Liana McCall. Liana has taught in the MIR Toddler program for 13 years.

The class will be held at MIR on Wednesdays, 4–5:15 PM, April 4, 11, 18, and 25. The discussion group will meet on Friday, April 27, 4–5 PM. The cost is \$50.

APRIL 2012

2 PTM Birthday Bags 4 Kids drive begins Summer School registration begins	3 Lango classes	4 Parent-Infant class Soccer clinics	5 Lango classes Spring Picture Day Choir	6 Bluebird Skate Night, 5-7 PM
9	10 Lango classes	11 Parent-Infant class Soccer clinics	12 Nikki's class trip to Pretend City Lango classes Choir	13 Jean/MH's class and Emily's class trip to see Annie PTM Birthday Bags 4 Kids drive ends
16 PTM Art Cards fundraiser begins PTM Board nominations open	17 Lango classes	18 Parent-Infant class Soccer clinics	19 Lango classes Choir	20 Coffee, Tea, and M.E., 8:45 AM and 4 PM Upper Elementary trip to Muscle Beach (all classes)
23 Elementary testing	24 Elementary testing Lango classes	25 Parent-Infant class 4th & 5th years' trip to Pali Mountain Soccer clinics	26 Nicole and Kelly Lower El trip to Discovery Science Center Lango classes 4th & 5th years' trip to Pali Mountain Choir	27 Bluebird assembly, 9:15 AM Parent-Infant class discussion group, 4 PM 4th & 5th years' return from Pali Mountain PTM Board nominations close
30	1 Lango classes	2	3 Lango classes	4/5 Spring Carnival, 11 AM to 3 PM

TWEET: twitter.com/mirmatters