



# BLUEBIRD BULLETIN

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## Experience the Magic of Montessori at *Journey & Discovery*

Montessori in Redlands and The Grove School invite you to join us for the semiannual *Journey & Discovery* on Saturday, November 3, 8 a.m.-2 p.m.

This event will let you experience for yourself the magic of a Montessori and some of the experiential methods described by Dr. Steven Hughes in his talk on October 22. You'll get a comprehensive look at Montessori education. The day will start with a *journey* through the entire Montessori curriculum from 18

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## Physical and Social Development in the Montessori Context

by MAURA JOYCE, HEAD OF SCHOOL

*"To give a child liberty is not to abandon him to himself."—Maria Montessori*

The first weekend in November, Montessori in Redlands offers parents a unique opportunity to get into the classrooms and work with the wonderful Montessori materials during *Journey & Discovery* on Saturday, November 3, 8 AM to 2 PM. This popular event is for adults only and allows parents to get a great view of the curriculum and setting their children experience every day.

There is one thing missing from *Journey & Discovery*, though, and that is the children. It is easy to imagine the children's *academic* and *intellectual* development after going through *Journey & Discovery*, but you don't get to see how they interact with the environment and with each other.

Montessori education puts equal emphasis on the *physical* and *social* de-

velopment of the child along with the academic. All three of these are the parts of our main goal in Montessori education: *the development of the personality*. Although our Montessori children graduate with strong academic, social, and physical skills, the most important work they do is working on their confidence and character. Watching children work in a Montessori environment can be a magical thing, as you all know! You sat in the classroom before your child began school at MIR, and something you saw made you say, "This is the place for my child. Most often the reaction that we get from prospective parents is, "They are all so focused and so calm." This is a genuine observation, as the children in

*(Continued on page 4)*





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

### EVENTS AND CALENDAR

#### Halloween Carnival was a Great Success

Thanks to all who made the Halloween Carnival a big success! Your volunteer efforts and donations made this a great event that was enjoyed by the whole MIR community. There was a huge turnout of kids and parents and we managed to raise money to offset the cost of this event. Thank you to all who participated.

#### Good Times at the PTM Family Skate Night

We had a great turn out at CalSkate—over 110 skaters of all ages attended! If you missed it this time, make sure you mark your calendars for the next one on Friday, February 1, 2013. A great time is had by all and we get the whole rink to ourselves. Whether you are learning to skate or are an old pro you have plenty of room to enjoy yourself. We look forward to seeing you in February 2013.

#### Next PTM Meeting

The next meeting will be held Wednesday, November 28, at 6 PM before the next Parent Education night. All are welcome and encouraged to attend. Come find out what is happening in our school and meet your PTM room representatives.

### FUNDRAISING CAMPAIGNS

#### Innisbrook Fall Campaign Results

PTM had just over \$4,100 in sales from our Innisbrook campaign and PTM receives 40% of the profits. This money gets reinvested in MIR to support events such as the Halloween Carnival as well as campus improvements.

Remember that you can continue to order from Innisbrook any time during the school year to purchase wonderful items and support Montessori. You can place orders online at [innisbrook.com](http://innisbrook.com). Our school code is 102074. Orders placed online will be shipped directly to your home. Thank you to all families who participated in this campaign.

#### Keep Bringing in Those BoxTops

Thank you to everyone who brought in their BoxTops for BoxTop Fridays in October. While we will not hold BoxTop Fridays again for a while, we do collect BoxTops all year. Keep bringing your clipped coupons to your classrooms or the office for collection. Thanks for your efforts!

#### Montessori Bluebird Items Now Available

Bluebird T-shirts in all sizes are now available. Show your school pride and wear your Bluebird shirt on Bluebird Assembly day, Friday, November 30. T-shirts can be purchased at the front office for just \$12 and are available in black and pink.

As an added bonus, take a picture someplace interesting of you or your child in a Bluebird shirt, and you may have it published in the Bluebird Bulletin! Submit your photos to Lisa Kensok at [lisa.kensok@montessoriinredlands.org](mailto:lisa.kensok@montessoriinredlands.org), or drop off a CD/DVD or printed picture in the office.

### COMMUNITY

#### PTM to Hold Holiday Food Drive for Joseph's Storehouse

PTM will again be organizing a food drive for Joseph's Storehouse this holiday season. The Food Drive will run from December 3-14. To participate, bring non-perishable food to your child's classroom or the office during that time.

Joseph's Storehouse is always looking for additional help. If you would like to find out how you and your family can further assist Joseph's Storehouse now and throughout the holidays, please call 909-793-5677.



#### Get Your Yummy Breakfast Burritos on November 16

The MIR 6th year Elementary students will be serving breakfast burritos and juice on Friday, November 16 for their next fundraiser for their Washington, D.C. trip. Burritos will include vegetarian options and will be served 7:30-9 AM. Thank you!

## Report from the Board

### 18 Months to 18 Years

by KELLY READ, STAFF REPRESENTATIVE  
AND ELEMENTARY TEACHER

As a teacher I usually think about the day to day—what lessons I will give or what school events are going on. But being on the board has given me a different perspective.

The board's job is to think about the long-term health of the school, which is so important because we have something special here. Sure, I have wonderful families and get to work with an amazing staff and administration. We have a lovely campus and well-kept facilities. But one of the things that makes MIR so special is that through our partnership with The Grove School, we can provide a Montessori education to children from 18 months to 18 years old.

So what? Most of us only pay attention to one age level at a time right? You're a Primary parent or a Farm Middle School parent. Elementary parents may not have stepped foot in a Toddler room in years, if at all. But our community is better and richer because of our "18 months to 18 years" program. When the toddlers walk by on their rope they bring a smile to everyone's face. They remind us to see the world anew again. And they are always the hit at the Holiday Sing.

Teachers know where a child has come from and where they are going. When a child moves to the next level they are placed with their new teacher after much thought and discussion. The teachers are able to talk about each individual child and their strengths and needs. Teachers are able to observe children before they move up. We can also provide a long visiting time or slower moving up schedule if that is what is best for the child.

Older children can do service in the younger classrooms, being a role model and an example. They have important jobs to do through the school. When my own child was in Primary she visited Farm and looked up to those middle school students. When she herself became a Farm student, it was special and she knew she was

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## Curriculum Matters

By PETER DAVIDSON,  
ASSISTANT HEAD OF SCHOOL

### Starting with the Big Idea

*"The essential thing is to arouse such an interest that it engages the child's whole personality."—Maria Montessori*

Parents who attended October's Coffee, Tea and M.E. (Montessori Education) had a fun experience in the human mind's innate tendency to find connections, meaning, and context. I won't try to describe the activity here, since it really should be experienced firsthand. Suffice it to say it was as surprising as it was convincing.

It is an activity I learned from Dr. Mariale Hardiman of Johns Hopkins University. In her book *Connecting Brain Research to Effective Teaching*, Dr. Hardiman makes the case that, "teaching chapter-by-chapter in the...text and assigning end-of-chapter questions may get students through the content, but...it will not result in meaningful learning," because "concepts taught in isolation are meaningless to students." Instead she recommends "providing students with 'big picture' ideas, then breaking those ideas into connected 'concept chunks' that relate students' prior knowledge and understanding to new information to be processed, integrated, applied, and retained."

With the parents at Coffee, Tea and M.E., I set out to demonstrate how in the Montessori classroom these very principles are applied on a daily basis.

#### Providing "Big Picture" Ideas First

Consider the Montessori approach to geography. Rather than the traditional approach of starting with the students' neighborhood and expanding out to the city, state, and country, Montessori starts with the world. It is only after the child has worked with the sandpaper globe and world puzzle map and learned to identify the continents and oceans, that she will proceed to the political divisions of each continent, starting with the puzzle map of North America. It is only after working with and learning countries all over the globe that she will proceed to the U.S. puzzle map and its states, including California. Later still, as an elementary student, after learning world physical and

*(Continued on page 6)*



## PHYSICAL AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT *(cont.)*

*(Continued from page 1)*

Montessori classrooms move with a purpose and know how to interact in a group. How do they get there? We follow the guidelines set down by Maria Montessori.

Dr. Montessori said, “What you give to the mind, you must first give to the hand.” She knew, as many scientists, doctors, and parents have observed, that beginning at a very early age, babies and children learn through their senses. They touch, smell, taste, hear, and see everything around them and explore texture, odor, flavor, sound, shape, color, etc. Beginning in Toddlers, the classroom is really a whole body experience. We start from the premise that children are physically capable of a lot. Children are shown “how to” and given the opportunity to practice: inside—walking, carrying, pouring, spooning, using their hands for everything; and outside—jumping, climbing, pedaling, digging, gardening.

All that movement requires learning how to move around things, including the other people who are there. Social development begins with Montessori’s concept of freedom and responsibility. Because children need to move and use their hands, there is a great deal of freedom in Montessori classrooms. However, that freedom is not handed over thoughtlessly. Children are carefully shown how to do things and then allowed as much freedom as they can handle. (That is, sharp scissors are not handed to the child who cannot control their hand movements.)

Social development and lessons on how to interact come in when this freedom and movement intersect. A child learns the intricate social structure of the classroom through many experiences:

- You cannot take a material that someone is already using (sharing)
- You must move around children and their work (respect)
- If you need to pass by you must ask another to move (courtesy)
- If you want to work with someone on a piece of work, you must learn the language to do so (inviting)
- If someone’s freedom infringes on yours, or if they do something that you do not like, you need to let them know (conflict resolution)

Living, working, and moving within a community leads to making and keeping friends, an activity that is

woven into the work of the Montessori classroom. It is part of each and every interaction, rather than just at recess or lunch. Children practice social skills constantly and they have both their successes and their failures along the way. The Montessori classroom presents a safe place in which to do so.

After attending *Journey & Discovery* this Saturday, find out more about the ways in which your child is experiencing the freedom and responsibility offered in the classroom. Please join the MIR teaching staff when they present the subject of our next Parent Education Night, *Physical and Social Development in the Montessori Context*, on Wednesday, November 28 at 7 PM.

### Parent Education Night Physical and Social Development in the Montessori Context

In a Montessori school, the focus isn’t only on the academic and intellectual growth of a child. Dr. Montessori believed that physical and social development were equally important, and that this development came through giving students freedom commensurate with their capabilities. “We must support as much as possible the child’s desires for activity; not wait on him, but educate him to be independent.” she said. This freedom in turn teaches them responsibility toward themselves and others.

Join us on Wednesday, November 28 at 7 PM to learn about the ways in which your child is experiencing the freedom and responsibility offered in the classroom, and how these are helping to develop his or her character and personality.

*“Character formation cannot be taught. It comes from experience and not from explanation.”*  
—Maria Montessori



# SCRAPBOOK



Jean and Maryhelen's Primary students visit Farm Middle School to pick out pumpkins.



Elementary students show a mixture of curiosity and uncertainty while observing dissections of cows eyes during the visit by Dr. Leila Khazaeni and her team.





## CURRICULUM MATTERS *(cont.)*

*(Continued from page 3)*

economic geography she will study California geography and history. Then she will learn, through “going out” expeditions, how to find her way around Redlands and the Inland Empire.

### Relating to Students’ Prior Knowledge

Since all of the activities in a Montessori classroom are sequential and related, there is a reference to prior knowledge built in to every lesson, as each builds upon the learning that came before.

Especially in elementary, though, it seems that nearly every lesson makes a point of referring to earlier learning, as in the lovely “Story of the Babylonians” told when introducing the degree symbol and the measurement of the circumference of a circle. It begins: “Do you remember when we talked about the Babylonians? How they lived in the area between the two rivers, the Tigris and Euphrates, in what is now Iraq? How the Hanging Gardens of Babylon were one of the seven wonders of the ancient world? Even though the height of their civilization was 4000 years ago, we still are talking about them and benefiting from their discoveries and inventions today.” Then and only then it proceeds to describe why it is that we divide circles into 360 degrees today because someone in Babylon, “and we don’t know who,” figured it out.

### Integrated Learning

Having an “integrated curriculum” is one of the buzzwords of 21st century education. By that, most schools mean that when Mrs. Smith the history teacher is teaching a unit on the American Revolution, Mr. Jones the English teacher might have the class read a story based upon that time period, such as Johnny Tremain. That’s a start. If you want to see what a truly integrated approach to education looks like, consider again a story such as that of the Babylonians, and ask yourself, “Is that a lesson in geometry, or history?” But the example I used for parents was the Detective Adjective Game, a fun way to experience the function of that particular part of speech as the child progressively searches for “just the triangle I’m thinking of.” On this occasion it was the “small, red, obtuse-angle, isosceles triangle.” Try figuring that out without a triangle! And again, in Montessori the learning is so fully integrated that you have to ask yourself, “Geometry? Or grammar?”

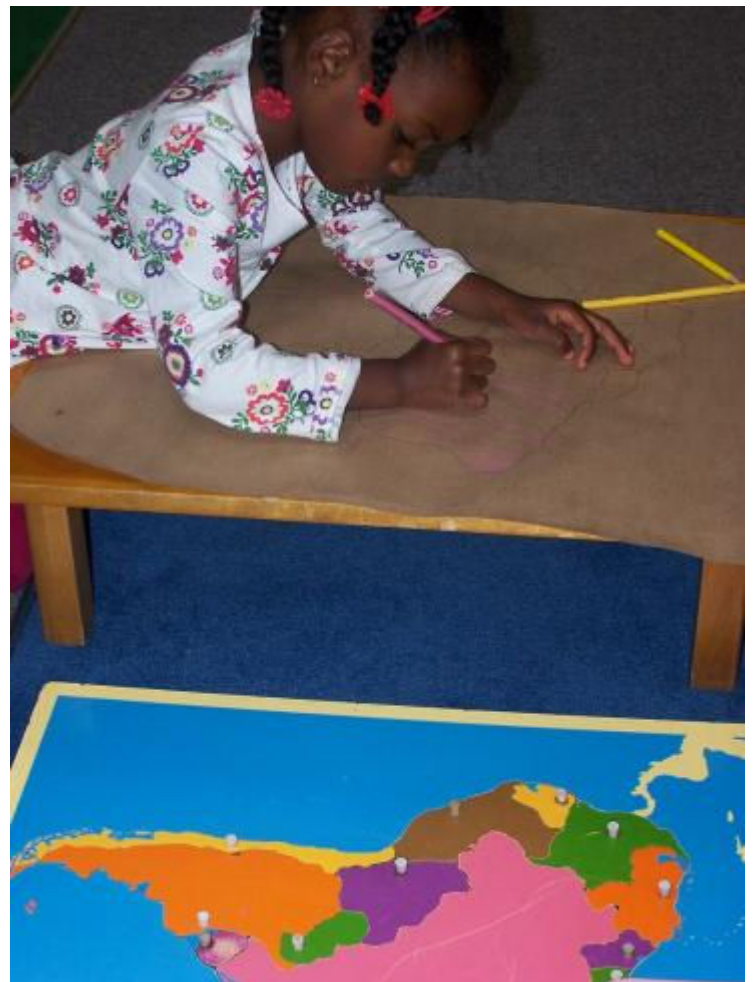
### The Application of Knowledge

Have you ever wondered why the structural elements in

our buildings are visible? It’s not because the school was too cheap to add sheetrock. It’s because as soon as a child learns about angles, she wants to apply that knowledge, to look around at acute, obtuse, and right angles in use in the real world. Did you ever notice that teachers select plants with a variety of leaf shapes and flower types for their classroom gardens? That’s so that students can immediately apply their botanical knowledge, finding examples of linear leaves and imperfect flowers and lateral buds as soon as they learn about them.

The most amazing aspect of all this is how far ahead of her time Dr. Montessori truly was.

Thanks to new magnetic resonance imaging technologies, neuroscientists can study learning and development in more detail than ever before. And, what kind environments do they recommend to optimize learning as they now understand it? The kind of environments Maria Montessori designed one hundred years ago.



## From the MIR Development Office

# Help MIR Keep Going and Growing for Your Child and Future Students

From its humble beginnings in a church basement with just 12 students over 35 years ago, MIR has grown to 12 beautiful classrooms on 12 acres of citrus groves, and a student body of 335 students. We continue to grow as we have because we create and maintain quality programs and provide a nurturing environment designed to help every student reach their full potential. Our peaceful grounds, calm and ordered classrooms, and the individualized attention each child receives at MIR provide them the opportunity to seek out their interests, realize their strengths, overcome their challenges, and, most importantly build their character and personality.

MIR is a private, non-profit school that strives to keep tuition as low as possible to keep our programs affordable without sacrificing value. It has grown and prospered not by charging high tuition rates, but with the support of dedicated parents, teachers, and friends of the school, like you. This unique, quality education does not come cheaply. We sustain and improve the quality of our programs through a successful Annual Fund. Each year we ask families, alumni, and friends to give generously to the MIR Annual Fund campaign. Whether through professional development, campus improvements, or financial aid, Annual Fund dollars allow Montessori in Redlands to keep going and growing. When you participate in the Annual Fund, you are supporting today's students and helping to grow an even stronger future for new generations of Montessori children.

We need your help to keep MIR going and growing. We are asking you to donate to the Annual Fund. Funds are used to support faculty—the teachers and assistants who work with your individual children each day; facilities—the preservation and upkeep of the beautiful MIR campus, and the continual enhancement of our technology infrastructure; and financial aid—financial subsidies to assist families in need with tuition. The more you give, the more we can do.

Pledges received by December 31 will qualify your child's classroom for educational benefits that will immediately benefit your child. Help MIR grow strong for our future, and donate today! Thank you for your support!

*“Without continual growth and progress, such words as improvement, achievement, and success have no meaning.”—Benjamin Franklin*



You should have already received your Annual Fund brochure in the mail. **Please help us by making your pledge and giving what you can.**

## BOARD REPORT (cont.)

*(Continued from page 3)*

now the role model.

The MIR board works with the Grove board to make sure the full continuum of learning is connected and supported. I still see my old students on campus, check in with them, and say hi as they walk from Farm to the high school. They are a part of a community. And we need community.

During *Journey & Discovery* you can walk through all the environments from 18 months to 18 years and see how the environment grows and changes to meet the needs of the child, from the tiny toddler furniture to the high school science lab. It is truly remarkable. If you have never done it I encourage you to come. It's great fun. It reminds me every time of what a special place MIR is. We have something unique in the Montessori world here with our "18 months to 18 years" program and I'm grateful to be a part of it.

**Schedule Your Parent/Teacher Conference(s)**

Parent/Teacher conferences offer important time with your child's teacher. Conferences will be held November 19 and 20 and allow you to learn about your child's progress and the work that they do each day. You will receive a progress report for your child and be able to discuss each academic and social/emotional area one-on-one with your child's teachers. **Sign up in the office for a time slot.**

*Alternate times are available if you are traveling. Please arrange with your child's teacher.*

**JOURNEY (cont.)**

*(Continued from page 1)*  
months to 18 years. You'll then *discover* the curriculum for ages 18 months to 6th grade or 1st grade through 12th grade (your choice).

This event will help you get to know your child's world. It is one of the most powerful experiences you will have in your time as a parent of a Montessori student. **It's not too late to RSVP—call the office at 793-6989.**



**GIS Day Activities for the Whole Family**

On Wednesday, November 14 parents and local community members will show MIR students how geographic information system (GIS) technology is being used to keep electricity running, help conservation efforts, map the oceans, and much more.

This year, you can celebrate GIS Day with your child as well. Esri, in partnership with the Smiley Library, is hosting a special GIS Day community event at the library. (Two MIR classes [Kara/Marie, Sara] will celebrate GIS Day with a mid-morning field trip to this event.) Elementary children and their families are invited to attend the event with their parents after school from 3-4:00 PM or 4:30-5:30 PM.

Most classes will celebrate GIS Day on-campus as well. We are still in need of volunteers to assist. If you would like to volunteer, please email [gisday@esri.com](mailto:gisday@esri.com).

For more information about GIS Day, visit [gisday.com](http://gisday.com).

**Free Tickets for Kids to Men's Professional Soccer Game on Nov. 3**

Soccer Coach Liam Muirhead has provided MIR with **30 free tickets for kids** to the LA Blues vs. Yucaipa Premier All-Stars soccer game on Saturday, November 3 at 8 p.m. at Yucaipa High School. Tickets are first-come, first served. Additional tickets cost \$10 each and can be purchased at [ypl1.com](http://ypl1.com). Please contact the MIR office to get your child's ticket!

**November 2012**

Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri
29 Elem. dance class	30 Lango classes	31	1 Childcare reservations due for Veteran's Day  Lango classes	2 Jean/MH class trip to Living Desert All Elem. 4th years: Heritage Tour <b>Saturday—Journey &amp; Discovery, 8 AM-2 PM</b>
5 Elem. dance class	6 Lango classes  Positive Discipline class, 6:30 pm	7 Elem. dance class	8  Make-up/retake Picture Day  Lango classes	9 <b>Staff in-service day. No school, no childcare.</b>
12 <b>Veteran's Day. No school, childcare by reservation.</b>	13 Childcare forms due for Parent/Teacher conferences Lower EI PE field trip to Hangar 18 Lango classes Positive Discipline class, 6:30 pm	14 Kara/Marie's class and Sara's class trip to Smiley Library  Elem. dance class  	15 Upper EI PE field trip to Hangar 18  Lango classes	16 6th Year breakfast burrito fundraiser, 7:30-9 AM  Coffee, Tea, and M.E., 8:45 AM
19	20	21	22 	23
<b>Parent/Teacher conferences. No school, childcare by reservation.</b>		<b>School closed for the holidays. No school, no childcare.</b>		
26 Elem. dance class	27 Sara's class trip to Living Desert  Lango classes	28 Elem. dance class PTM Meeting, 6 PM Parent Ed Night, 7 PM	29 Lango classes	30 Bluebird assembly, 9:15 AM 6th Year Pampered Chef fundraiser