



Primary students performing at Music and Muchies.

Inside

History of MOM	2 & 3
Toddler 1	4
Toddler 2	5
Primary 1	6
Primary 2	7
Lower Elementary 1	8
Lower Elementary 2	9
Upper Elementary	10
Middle/High School	11

Montessori of Macon's Mission

"To Educate the Whole Child for a Whole World."

By the whole child, we mean the social, emotional, physical, spiritual and intellectual aspects of being human. By nurturing the wholeness of our children and fostering respect for each other, nature and community we prepare them for a life of continued joy that will contribute positively to a whole world.

Parent Survey

We want your feedback!
Help us by completing our
parent survey!

The link to the survey is:
<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/MOMPparent2016>.



My connection with the school that later became Montessori of Macon started 26 years ago when Kenneth and I volunteered with a small group of families to form an alternative to traditional schools. The families had personal experiences with Montessori Education or knowledge of its philosophy. Word of our efforts drew other parents, and in one year we named the school Whole Child-Whole World with Bob Karrfalt as the first president of the Board of Directors. By the 1991-92 school year, WCWW opened with an enrollment of almost 15 students in a range of elementary grades. Their parents, who came from a variety of backgrounds, simply wanted other educational options just as many other cities offered.

From the beginning, Dee Russell, a well-trained educator steeped in alternative forms of learning, including the ideas of John Holt, directed the program. Parent volunteers were essential, and each year enrollment increased. I supported WCWW on the sidelines as a parent volunteer while continuing a newspaper career locally for 14.5 years.

However, months before the 1993-94 school year, I surprised myself and accepted an offer to become MOM's second Upper Elementary teacher when Elizabeth Goodwin, a Montessori-trained teacher, relocated to another state while her daughters Ember and Sarah remained students for a short time. Interestingly, Ember Kemmerer is one of the administrators of MOM, and Sarah Kelley directs the Middle School and High School programs.

All of the families loved the Montessori-type approach we were creating, and incorporated "building" the school into our lifestyles – from renovations and repairs, to finding furniture and equipment to organizing social and cultural events. By 1993, the Board of Directors re-named the school Montessori of Macon, gained affiliation with the American Montessori Society and recruited teachers. We had reached a new level, and progress continued with some challenges along the way.

Now, I am retiring after 23 years of teaching and earning the 6-to-12 Certification from the American Montessori Society and a Master's Degree in Literacy from Lesley University. My children, Burnes and Vivi, had the opportunity to interact with students from many backgrounds and gained confidence about themselves in small-school setting before encountering traditional education. I enjoyed the support of three additional principals – Elizabeth Irwin, Tanya Melville, and Michele Scott. Over a few short years, I watched, the fiscal responsibility of the Board of Directors acquire property on Tolliver Place and construct the first building in MOM's Global Village. In 2009 the Toddler and Primary programs relocated, and in 2010 the Elementary and Middle School programs moved. The experience of seeing the dreams and work of countless families fulfilled was inspiring.

Under my watch as a teacher, I have worked with a few hundred students with bright minds, creative talents, and empathetic spirits. Early on, I realized there was so much that I did not know about children, and yet there were many aspects that I did understand and sought to share. Many assistants have helped to guide the program. In 2004 Fran Hirsh, whose children, Shannon and Seth, are Upper El graduates, joined the program as a co-teacher bringing a strong background in math and science. For 12 years, we have witnessed children mature, guided them to understand that disappointments help us grow, wrestled with school-life dilemmas, celebrated students' accomplishments, and benefitted from the ideas, support and generosity of many parents. It is always rewarding to see and to hear about former students.

One of my most important accomplishments has been working for 26 years with families who wanted a non-traditional academic program that would nurture empathy and respect toward others, provide a solid foundation in core subjects and skills, and embraced learning about people and cultures in the world.

MONTESSORI OF MACON

May 2016

3

Newsletter



MONTESSORI OF MACON

Toddler 1

Ms. Deidra & Ms. Hattie

May 2016

4

Newsletter



Cooper & Logan



Leo, Abigail, Julian, & Connor



Delia & Anna

This session we studied flowers and bugs. We started off by preparing our patio for outdoor work. The children helped us plant fresh flowers in our garden boxes. This opened up conversations about how plants grow, the way they smell, the different colors, and how they vary in appearance. We even planted a cherry tomato plant. Already we can see tomatoes starting to grow.

We also enjoyed having Delia, a 7th grade student from the Middle/High Program in the classroom. She was with us for a week completing her internship. The children loved showing her their lessons. Delia enjoyed reading to them, helping with art projects, baking cookies and participating in other fun activities. Having Delia was a lot of fun, and I'm sure she enjoyed it just as much as we did!

We took advantage of the beautiful weather and enjoyed lunch on the patio. This was a really big hit among the children. It's nice to appreciate the simple things, such as enjoying a meal outdoors.

This session we also had our annual art show. This is always a fun way for us to get together as a class community, just before the school year ends. This has been another great year! I can't wait to see what next year has to offer.



Iris



Delia & Finn

Toddler 2

Ms. Amanda & Ms. Carla

MONTESSORI OF MACON

May 2016

5

Newsletter



Max



Henry & Levi



Nate



Nate & Levi

The Toddler 2 students are enjoying the final session of the school year. They are embracing the spring season by watering our flower garden every day and enjoying the sunshine while working on the patio.

The toddlers each planted grass seeds in cups and water them daily. They are eager to check the growth of their grass every morning. The toddlers have learned about many different insects and they love to explore the playground for snails and beetles. They are careful to only observe them with their eyes and not disturb them. The children have learned about living and nonliving things. They have explored and worked with magnets. They have also learned the difference between heavy and light weighted objects.

Our classroom has allowed the children to grow socially and emotionally. It has allowed them to build a healthy community of friends. The children have had many opportunities to learn self-care skills and care of the environment. The works in the classroom allow for refinement of fine motor and gross motor skills. The toddlers have learned many life-long independent skills that lay the foundation for further learning. I'm happy to see how much they have grown from the very first day in the classroom to now. It has been a successful year and I am happy to have been able to share in these experiences with your child. Thank you.



Noor



C.J.

MONTESSORI OF MACON

Primary 1 Ms. Paula & Ms. Whitney

May 2016

6

Newsletter

Dr. Montessori was a believer of the importance of nature education. She understood that the outdoor environment should be an extension of the classroom. In Montessori's own words, "There must be provision for the child to have contact with nature; to understand and appreciate the order, the harmony and the beauty in nature." Primary 1 is very lucky to have an amazing outdoor garden classroom where the children learn new lessons every day.

During this last session, in addition to our outside lessons, we learned about our planet (inside and outside) and the different ways to take care and celebrate the Earth. Then we connected those lessons with spring, ladybugs, butterflies, baby animals, and farming. We also studied a great scientist named James D. Watson, who co-discovered the structure of DNA, and connected those lessons to all the diverse kinds of families that make our world a better place. We traveled to Africa and got a firsthand lesson about this continent when Evelyn (Sia's grandma) shared with us about her home country, Liberia. In addition to our science and geography lessons, we got to celebrate International Children's Book Day and read a Hans Christian Andersen biography to our older children.



Mahi



Oliver

It is hard to believe this is our last newsletter of the school year; I never expected it to go this fast. This year, like the words of our silent auction item, we have loved, lived, laughed and played. Whitney and I have witnessed the children become more and more independent. It is so rewarding to look back at how far we have all come. I am so proud of our children's hard work. They have built a community by caring for each other and their environment and by being great role models.

I am very grateful for the support of our parents. Whitney and I are very fortunate to have such an amazing group of families in our classroom, always ready to help. Thank you for trusting us with your most valuable treasures!



Kaydin



Zander



Camille

Primary 2

Ms. Amanda & Ms. Jenny

MONTESSORI OF MACON

May 2016

7

Newsletter

This spring we have been learning about plants and trees. We have talked about seeds, seed coats, seedlings, and all the conditions necessary for plant life to grow. We not only talk about these topics, but we have been getting first hand experience in the garden. We have sprouted seedlings in the classroom, and planted them in the garden. We've planted carrots, radishes, tomatoes, and strawberries. The children have helped with garden area maintenance such as watering, digging in the soil, adding soil to the garden plots, and adding mulch to the garden walkways. They have been practicing raking and weeding their individual garden plots, and as previously mentioned, planting seeds and seedlings. We have learned about earthworms and other insects that are healthy for the soil in the garden.

This session we have been studying Australia. Adelaide's family came in to do a presentation about Australia, where we learned about Uluru Rock, the Great Barrier Reef, Sydney, and other towns they visited. Students also learned about the Aboriginal tribes living in parts of Australia. It is always great to have families come in, share their experiences, and show objects of interest. We would like to thank all the families who have helped with many special projects, pet care, gardening, maintenance/cleaning, and more throughout this school year. You are all appreciated!

In May we learned about Africa. We learned about the geography, the people, the wildlife, culture and cuisine. We also studied the layers of the Earth and learned

about the different types of rock in the Earth's crust. We learned about volcanoes and earthquakes and how islands form.

In addition to the community and garden times, we have had busy and productive mornings in the classroom. It's wonderful to see the growth of the students from the beginning of the school year. What was once challenging work for them now comes easier. The oldest children have been working to complete pages for their own personal portfolios containing the special works we have saved for them in the classroom. Some of the older children are looking back in wonder and awe at works they used to do, and comparing them to the works they now are able to do. This is a unique opportunity they have to understand not only how they learn and grow, but is also a great keepsake for them. They have a unique opportunity to present these portfolios to their families at the end of the school year.



Andersen



Lukas



Symone & Drisana



Ana



Oliver & Charlie

MONTESSORI OF MACON

Lower Elementary 1 Ms. Sally & Ms. Kerry

May 2016

8

Newsletter



Daphne

Imagine if your first experience with squares of numbers was when you were three. You used them to learn about proportions and balance. You then learned about squares by counting up to a number times itself, on a chain that had a special color based on number. You had a neural connection not only to quantity of a number but also a color, a weight, a length, and its proportion to other numbers. Imagine if you started seeing the literal squares made out a certain number of beads times itself. You saw how 4×4 makes the shape of a square. Then you saw how our base-10 number system was perfectly proportioned because you saw exactly 1, 10, 100, and 1000 beads put together. You didn't have to believe that 1,000 was 1,000 ones, because you saw it. You counted it. You folded it up into hundreds. You stacked it into one thousand. What if you did your addition with exactly the quantity you were talking about on the paper? That quantity that was perfectly proportioned. You were allowed to move and encouraged to carry, walk back and forth, and use your muscles and memory to gather your numbers.

As you advanced you could use things that were not proportioned because you had experienced it yourself and knew that 100 was 100 ones. So you now have equal-sized things. Now you have another group of colors to aid you. You learn certain colors for place value, repeating itself based on the hierarchical family. Ones of something, tens of something, and hundreds of something, maintaining the same pattern as high as your math will go.



Max



Jesse

Imagine as you begin to do math your materials grow with you. You begin with small quantities then larger with your color-coded, base-ten designed material growing to add numbers to your repertoire. The numbers are bigger but you take comfort knowing the colors repeat themselves for each family. As the material grows larger, you are exposed to larger versions of that proportioned material. You see with familiar color the difference between one million and one thousand. It is a reality in front of you. You now trust that your materials would add up to ten. Your bead frame has 10 on each row. Your racks and tubes always have ten in each tube.

Imagine as those quantities grow larger so does your knowledge of math facts. You work with materials to show the proportions, patterns, and repetition of those math facts up to the 10s. As you work to master the operations, you practice with materials that excite and grow with every discovery you make. As your memory of math facts grows, your materials do not change. You don't have to learn a new material, but your materials grow to fit your needs. You are encouraged to talk, work, help, observe others. You have works designed to be used with others, to teach you collaboration and real-world skills. Your lessons are about sharing, dividing things among people. Your lessons are linked to others and how people work together with numbers.

Imagine if you lay out beautiful colored beads that you know mean certain numbers based on color, counting, and size. If you lay out your multiplication facts you can see how some make rectangles and some make squares. What if those familiar squares and cubes you'd made out of counting, folding, and stacking turned into an algebraic formulas?

Imagine and you'll imagine the Montessori way of math.

Lower Elementary 2

Ms. Gyni & Ms. Katherine



MONTESSORI OF MACON



May 2016

9

Newsletter

In LE 2, we frequently gather as a class to listen to books being read aloud. This school year, we've focused on books from *The Little House on the Prairie* collection by Laura Ingalls Wilder. Seeing life through the eyes of a young girl living in the early years of our nation has given us a new perspective on the history of our country and a new appreciation for the security and conveniences we enjoy today.

In the mid-1800s, Laura and her family lived simply and close to the land in their small log cabin in Wisconsin. *Little House in the Big Woods*, shows us how much the Ingalls depended on what they could raise in their garden, the milk and eggs gathered from their animals, and on Pa's success in hunting to provide food for the family. In this simpler time, we were able to see the importance of the contributions of the children to the work of running the home as they worked along with their parents: sweeping, gathering eggs, learning to sew and churn and cook. Our students connect with some of these activities from their practical life experiences at home and at Montessori of Macon.

Little House on the Prairie depicts the excitement and hardships of American pioneers as the Ingalls leave their extended family, and most of their belongings behind, to move westward to Minnesota in a covered wagon. Their horses and dog play important roles in the welfare of the family as they depend on them for transportation and protection from wild animals. Several encounters with Native Americans introduce us in a personal way and serve to spark discussions about the difficulties of the pioneers' interactions with those who already occupied the land. *Farmer Boy* tells about a year in the life of nine-year old Almanzo Wilder, the boy who would grow up to marry Laura, on his father's big farm in rural New York. Here we see farm life on a big scale: the Wilders raise crops and livestock to support the larger community. Almanzo and his brothers have important responsibilities in accomplishing the work. They get up at 5:00 each morning to milk the cows and feed the stock. They plant crops and help with the harvest. His sisters help their mother in the kitchen as they prepare meals to feed the family and the farm workers and to store food for the long New York winter months.

We started reading the Little House books in conjunction with our field trip to the Georgia Museum of Agriculture and Historic Village in December. It was remarkable to see how well the books prepared us to understand what we saw there and to bring to life what we had learned. We hadn't necessarily planned to keep reading the series through, but as we finish each book, the children have asked when we'll begin the next one. It is thrilling to see them enjoying the stories and learning from them at the same time.

We've just finished reading *The Long Winter*. This book finds the Ingalls family in the Dakota Territory, where they have moved as they followed Pa's work with the railroad as it was built westward. Dependent upon coal and food supplies from the east coming in by train, the Ingalls and other families in their small town nearly starved during the severe blizzards of 1880-1881, when no trains could get through. The Ingalls survived by grinding wheat in their small coffee grinder to make bread and twisting hay into "haysticks" that could be burned for warmth. They suffered the effects of malnutrition from eating almost nothing but bread made from the wheat for months on end. Our students have studied nutrition this year and were able to understand that a diet of nothing but carbohydrates is not enough to support good health.



Ashley & Kristen

MONTESSORI OF MACON

Upper Elementary
Ms. Tethel, Ms. Fran,
Mr. Joseph & Ms. Susan

May 2016

10

Newsletter



UE students with Andres & Melisa

For the first time in the history of MOM, Upper Elementary hosted two foreign exchange students for one month. We were thrilled to have Melisa and Andres from Colegio Colombio Britanico in Envigado, Colombia with us. Even though they arrived in the midst of the session, they threw themselves immediately into their work. Our students were always happy to explain things when needed. On their last day, they shared with the group that although they missed their families and were excited to see them again, they did not want to leave and are hoping to visit again. We were sorry to see them leave, but several of our students have expressed an interest in spending a few weeks at their school in Colombia.

Session 4 brought us the advent of student-initiated clubs. The first club to form was the Art Club. Three 5th year students joined forces to teach lessons such as drawing, finger-painting, and watercolor. The club meets twice weekly during recess, and anyone is welcome to join. Desiring more performance opportunities, two students, a 5th year and a 6th year, created the Drama Club. They work on improvisation, movement, character development, and vocals. At the end of the session, they hope to perform a song from *The Sound of Music*. Seeing there were few sports offerings, several of our 4th year students started the Soccer Club. They have a balance between working on skills such as shooting, dribbling, and passing. In addition to fundamentals of soccer there are also several games in which students from all grades enjoy participating. We are excited to see what other clubs await us in the future!



Drama Club



Nnamdi, Mazzy, & Jasmine

One of the high points of Session 4 is our Annual Music & Munchies. Upper El students had the privilege of entertaining the attendees by playing several recorder pieces. Not only did Upper El play alone, they also joined together with Lower El on the ever-popular song, *Jamaican Farewell*. We are proud of all our students in their musical efforts. In addition to the music portion of Music and Munchies, we had our Annual Art Auction featuring projects from each classroom. This year, our students were involved in every part of the creation process. Over the course of several days, we decided on a “mosaic” of a tree made from geometric shapes. Students used whatever painting techniques and colors they desired, then cut their painted paper into small “shards.” The shards were arranged in the shape of a tree. In order to reflect MOM’s emphasis on community, togetherness, and connectivity, each student was to respond to this prompt: “I can make a difference by...” using just a few words. These phrases were written on clouds and leaves surrounding the tree. We were pleased that all students were fully involved from the conception to the completion of our project.

Under the guidance of Ms. Susan, the garden is ready for planting! We have been gifted several varieties of plants and in the coming days we will be eagerly tending the garden and awaiting the harvest.

Middle/High Ms. Sarah & Mr. Robert

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May 2016

11

Newsletter

“The theatre, the theatre, what’s happened to the theatre?” – “Choreography,” from Irving Berlin’s White Christmas.

When asked to describe adolescents, a good majority of people may use the word “dramatic.” Well, this time of year, in the Middle/High classroom, dramatic behavior is encouraged! Session four of the school year marks our fifth annual Shakespeare production and the classroom is abuzz with excitement. The classroom is also full of discussions about theatre, Shakespeare, literature, and history.

The high school students have been studying drama in their Literary Types course which has helped them to see what theatre forms influenced Shakespeare as well as how Shakespeare influenced many theatre forms to follow. They studied the format for play writing as well, as they worked on writing their own original plays. Who knows, we may have the next William Shakespeare in our very own classroom!

The middle school students got to spend the week leading up to their performance learning all about Shakespeare and the Elizabethan Era. They participated in activities that help them to understand Elizabethan English and iambic pentameter on a deeper level. They also researched different aspects of Elizabethan life to gain a better understanding of what life may have been like for William Shakespeare and his characters.

While all of these lessons are a great way to help the students look at history and literature in a new way, the performance itself is a great learning tool. Theatre helps students learn time management skills as well as deepens their ability to read text critically. It helps to boost their self-confidence levels and teaches them to work together as a team. In theatre, each student depends on the others to make sure the show will come together perfectly. This encourages them to not only put their trust in others, but to live up to the responsibility of being trustworthy, as well. They learn perseverance as they repeat the same scene, action, or movement, over and over again; each time getting closer and closer to perfection.

In the past five years of Shakespeare performances, I have seen the students do wonderful things. I have watched as they run off the stage as the curtain falls, beaming with the pride of knowing that all of their hard work paid off. I have seen their confidence grow in whatever activities they take on, both at school and outside of school, due to their successes in the theatre. I am always blown away by the level of professionalism that the students bring to their performances, and I believe that this year will be no different. I hope to see this tradition continue on for many years to come!



Emily, Delia, & Judah



Middle/High students rehearsing



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EDUCATING THE WHOLE CHILD FOR A WHOLE WORLD

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May 2016

12

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