

## **Elementary – November 2, 2018**



In the Cosmic Education curriculum, History serves to help the children understand their place in the drama we call Life. The stories we tell the children help to give key ideas needed for the children to understand the amazing drama of which they are a part, and which has carried on since the beginning of time. Dr. Maria Montessori hoped to inspire them through the historical stories to take an active role in the work towards harmonious cooperation with nature and other people. We owe much more than we realize to the ordinary people from the past. The 'exceptional' people, the great inventors we can read about, have all built their ideas and inventions on the foundations laid by thousands of years of inventive activity at all levels of refinement and technology. The focus on the greatness of creativity in "ordinary people" stresses that all human beings have the potential to create, to use their intelligence and to extend their compassion.

In Upper Elementary, the children opened their doors to the first Mystery History Museum. Each student picked a person from history who inspired them and researched their life. They also created terrific costumes and props to go with their inspirational hero. There were mustaches, wigs, guitars, just to mention a few. Then, parents were invited to come and guess who each student represented. Students picked scientists, musicians, athletes such as Maria Mitchell, Bob Dylan, Jackie Robinson, Steve Jobs, Marie Curie and more!

Alongside stories about great people, history is also steeped in traditions passed on year after year. Here, at The Montessori School, the children participated in the traditional Harvest Festival. On Wednesday, the last day of October, the school gathered together outside, around a cauldron of soup cooking over a fire. The toddlers played on drums and the primary and elementary classrooms each sang songs. The sixth years told the story of Stone Soup, incorporating all the classrooms into the story by asking, "Hannah's class, do you have any food for us?" Each classroom anticipated the questions with smiles and answered enthusiastically, "Yes!" They would then add their special ingredient to the soup. Finally, the children got to have muffins and soup. Each piece of the day was carefully orchestrated based on the traditions that were there from previous years. As each child moves up to towards their sixth year, they know that they too will have a turn to tell the story of Stone Soup.

Beyond the stories, the children are continuing to explore their world. Both Lower Elementary classrooms have been working on various biology topics such as leaves and the five senses. In preparation for the Harvest festival, children harvested vegetables from their gardens, washed them and cut them up for the soup. Within that experience, children learn about different parts and varieties of plants. The most profound and most valuable learning the children will have are those made through real-life experiences, creating memories that will be with them forever. These biology lessons are beautiful examples of how it happens in the Montessori community.

### **Looking Ahead**

We want to extend a friendly reminder to come to observe your child, if you haven't had a chance yet, in preparations for parent conferences coming November 15 and 16. You are also encouraged to meet with the specialists, so take the opportunity to sign up near the front office.

Warmest Regards,

*Lisbeth and the Elementary Team*