



Boundary Bay Montessori House

Operated by MIND

Volume 1, Issue 4

November 2004



Message from the Academic Director

On Friday I had the pleasure of a day off – or rather a day to catch up on the other responsibilities in my life such as connecting with my older children and performing service to their schools which require volunteer obligations. The morning began with a breakfast date with my eldest son.

It was a necessary meeting as I felt compelled to check in with him and find out how he was doing as the conversation that I had shared with him the evening before was somewhat unsettling. He had alluded to the fact that he felt a sense of purposelessness in the activities that had once challenged and consumed him passionately. I had asked him if, while he is mulling over his options, he might want to perform some service to society – one that will give him a sense of purpose and the rosy goodfeeling of helping others.

“You mean work in a soup kitchen – kind of thing?” He asked dubiously.

“Well yes”, I replied hesitantly, as I was silently

screening my suggestion for his young adult scrutiny.

Aagh! I thought anxiously and hoped he would accept the idea and blend in happily with the world.

“Not really interested in that”, he replied and began to change the subject.

Hence, the meeting for breakfast – I would connect and we would laugh and he would emerge full of pep and affirmed for just being part of the universe albeit temporarily lacking a sense of purpose!

The next morning we met and as we walked into the restaurant he said “Mom, you know how you said that I might want to work in a soup kitchen?”

“Yes” I said, wondering what was coming next.

“Well I just met up with my friend, Rebecca, she’s another girl I know who also went to a Montessori School and she’s cooking in one – I

might look into it”.

The point being the seed was planted, the information was processed and he admires this person not only for who she is but for the connection he has with her as a Montessori student.

Earlier this week, I served Thomas his porridge – *and I know that he should probably be independent enough to make his own but this is not the point of the story* – after pouring in his milk he said “Look Mom, I made an island, a lake and an inlet.” To him the conversation is normal – to me I smile inwardly thinking of Cathy Goss teaching landforms with models of the landforms and jugs of water. A dynamic lesson with lasting impact. And the point being? These are just a few of the Montessori moments in my life. They are outside of my experience but I am privileged to be witness to them in my children. They are not tangible but they are a result of the method of education that my children have received by the loving and

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REMINDERS

-  Science World for the Intermediates November 25, 2004
-  All Elementary Students Symphony Field Trip November 18, 2004
-  Preschool Universal Childrens Day November 19, 2004
-  3 Way Conferences November 15/16 - No Classes
-  Winter Concert December 15 at Delta Arts Council
-  Winter Skating Party December 17 at Ladner Rink

BLUEPRINT UPDATE

The staff will be continuing with the blueprint cycle by reviewing the sections of the blueprint listed below. (Please past newsletters for additional information regarding the blueprint cycle.)

- ♥ Recognizing that we must satisfy the learning outcomes specified by the Ministry of Education, we approach learning as seeking to understand each student’s uniqueness, guide him/her individually and at his/her own pace through the range of learning outcomes so that he/she fully realizes his/her potential.
- ♥ We celebrate the natural diversity of human beings, be it in learning style, interests, or definition of what makes a happy and successful life.
- ♥ We affirm the ideal of the renaissance person. Our ultimate goal is to produce renaissance men and women who have not only learned how to learn, but also have an innate love of learning, a wide range of interests, and an openness to new ideas and possibilities.
- ♥ We nurture self-esteem. We affirm that self-esteem is a crucial ingredient for the full expression of a person’s potential. We strive to base every interaction between community members on this principle, from how we foster self-discipline to respecting personal learning styles and stages of development. This is the very fabric of our community and our educational methods.
- ♥ 1.2.7. We strive to provide a safe learning environment in which students take the necessary risks to progress and grow. Through feedback and self-evaluation, students learn from all experiences, both positive and negative.



What's Happening in the Classroom

PRESCHOOL UPDATE

Yes, **snack** is an important learning area in our classroom. Children learn patience by waiting their turns, independence by serving, eating and cleaning-up after themselves, sensory experience through the tastes and smells, as well as respecting others by choosing an appropriate amount of food. Occasionally, we partake in group snack and we practice grace and courtesy by waiting until everyone is served and sing a little song about appreciating the animals, vegetables and minerals that make it possible..... Last Friday we created a tangy and tasty treat for us all to enjoy as a group snack: Cranberry/Blackberry sauce with vanilla ice cream! A lesson in itself, this snack included Cranberries which originate from Canada and Blackberries which we all have a chance to enjoy in the summertime.

Parent Education Evening- A great success!

Thank you to all the parents who were able to attend our very successful Parent Education evening presented by the teachers on Thursday November 4th. For preschool and kindergarten parents we provided an opportunity to learn exactly what your children are learning in our Montessori environment. We prepared learning material around the different areas of the class and presented examples of the lessons. The significance of the lessons and the learning aims were described and demonstrated with: simple pouring and snack (Practical Life), The Pink Tower and the Binomial Cube (Sensorial Development), Metal Insets for Design and a Pink Box (Language), Spindle Boxes and counting through (Mathematics) as well as Land/ Air /Water transportation sorting and Art Appreciation (Culture). We encourage all parents to attend the Parent Education evenings which provide an excellent format for understanding what your children are actually "doing" in their class here from Monday to Friday. The evenings are designed to provide parents with an opportunity to gain insight into your child's learning environment and get hands-on exposure in the class. They are also designed with an entertaining and social atmosphere with our entire BBMH community with the chance to be involved with a glimpse of the future in the Primary and Intermediate teachers in their classrooms. **Remember:** attending counts toward your Volunteer Hours, please record your 2 hrs. in the red binder in the Parent Library in the main Hallway.

Universal Children's Day – November 19th

We are happily exploring the continents through artifacts, story, food, dress, Language and are preparing for the Universal Children's Day on November 19th. Please sign-up if you wish to provide a dish for our Multicultural buffet. We invite you and your family to join us for a presentation and then luncheon as a group. If you are able, please have your children arrive at school dressed in attire which exemplifies typical dress from any country around the world (Kimono or Sari as examples). This is a very exciting event and we encourage and invite you all to attend.

Friendly reminders: Promptness upon arrival and dismissal: class-time begins at 9am sharp. Latecomers may miss some important information or we may have to delay the group time in order to wait for the others. Check the parent information board in the entryway for current and upcoming events for preschool and kindergarten families – This is our format for communication. Check the board, check the board, check the board!

Thank you for your ongoing support, Jana and Andrea

PRIMARY CLASS UPDATE

Our studies in culture are related to the Animal Kingdom. Year One students are learning about the classes of chordata and they are writing information from the pocket charts to define the specific characteristics of each group. Year Two children are investigating Invertebrates and the Year Three students are conducting research on an animal of their choice from invertebrates and vertebrates by fact-finding using books and computers. They are exhibiting their facts in display cards and illustrating their work. All this study is absorbing and reflects teamwork, enthusiasm and ever-present curiosity. The Year Two children are busy with Geography, creating two-layer maps of Canada. Most have completed their political maps and are improving their skills by carefully creating their physical maps which require attention to detail and careful use of an atlas.

Some of the virtues we have been learning are courtesy, compassion, graciousness and humility. Some of these words are familiar to us and are easy to define. Some virtues are evident in us but we are now giving a name to this quality. For example, the children are naturally compassionate by being kind, loving and helpful to someone who is ill, hurt or sad. Now they have the word to name their behaviour. Discussing, writing and illustrating a virtue is an activity that occurs this year on Wednesday mornings.

We have had a fire drill and realize it is important to wear slippers all the time. Some children responded promptly to the bell but found themselves outdoors on wet ground in November without footwear. Many slippers need to be replaced and this is the season you will find a good selection of your child's next size in the stores. Please make sure to purchase them within the next few weeks and check with your children to ensure they are wearing properly fitting slippers.



It took me four years to paint
like Raphael, but a lifetime to
paint like a child.

Picasso

INTERMEDIATE CLASS UPDATE

Another busy month! U.N. Day was a wonderful success with so many colourful and interesting costumes and delicious foods. In particular, the Unicef game "Taking Responsibility" was wonderful to watch as groups of students negotiated items to take to a deserted island.

Our Parent Education Evening was very successful with presentations of the River and discussion about what to expect for the developmental characteristics of the young adolescent aged 9 – 13.

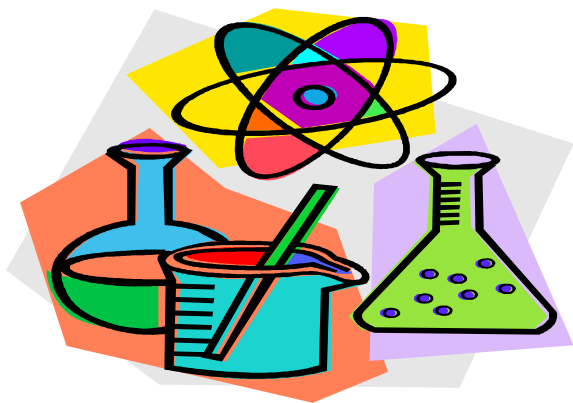
You probably never have seen your children so quiet for so long as the day of our first "Read-a-thon". It was a peaceful and eventful day as we read and shared books for the majority of the day.

We are looking forward to two field trips in November. The intermediate class will be going to the Orpheum on November 18th to hear "A Symphonic Adventure on the High C's". We will be leaving the school at 10:30 AM. Pick up will be at the regular time of 3:00 PM in the afternoon.

On November 25th, the Intermediate class will be going to science world to further explore the human body and it's complexity. In science, during November, we are focused on studying the circulatory, and immune systems. Some time will also be spent on the scientific method and conducting experiments.

Physical education this month is centred around weekly skating and continued outdoor activities when the weather allows.

Eileen Wilson and Barbara Hofmann



BBMH CALENDAR
Fall Term 2004

September	2	Primary Orientation
	7	School Begins/Open House
	10	BBQ
	13	Sign up For Conferences
	15	Peace Day
	17	Newsletter
	20	Potluck Sign Up
	23	Parent Conferences
	24	Potluck/AGM
October	5	Mohandas Gandhi
	11	Thanksgiving Day
	15	Newsletter
	21	UN Day
	25	ProD Day 1
	27	Sign up for Obs/3way
November	1	Read-a-thon
	8	Observation Week
	11	Remembrance Day
	12	Newsletter
	15	3 Way Conferences
	16	3 Way Conferences
	26	ProD Day 2
December	10	Newsletter
	13	Rehearsal
	14	Rehearsal
	15	Rehearsal/Concert
	17	Skating Party
	17	Winter Holiday 11:30 am

The way I treat my inner child is the way I am going to treat my outer child.

Robert M. Stein



Operated by MIND

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Boundary Bay Montessori House is an independent Montessori school registered and classified as a Group I school (Preschool to Grade 7) under the British Columbia Ministry of Education. BBMH opened its Elementary program in 1990. BBMH is administered by the Montessori in Delta Society (MIND), a registered non-profit society since 1986. MIND is comprised of educators and parents who strive to promote excellence in Montessori education in Delta, B.C. All staff are qualified by the Ministry of Independent Schools or the B.C. College of Teachers in accordance with the Independent School Act of British Columbia.

Remembrance Day Observance

On Wednesday, November 10, 2004 we had our Remembrance Day observation. We shared circle hearing the history of the poppy (sent from Iraq by Allen Kanerva), listening to a story by Nicholas Wilton called Feathers and Fools and hearing an essay by Desmond Tutu, a nobel peace prize winner, who attempted to answer the question of *Why is There War?*. This concluded with a passage "...there is always hope for peace....we will turn our swords into plows and our spears into pruning scythes. We will take the things that we have used for war and use them for cultivating the earth, for agriculture, for growing things...." We then went outside and planted tulips and daffodils into our planting boxes with the hope that when the bulbs begin to bloom they will be a symbol of our hope for peace.



United Nations Day

It is mid-November, and we haven't had a chance to report to you about the delight of this year's United Nation's Day held on Thursday, October 21st. Everyone came to school with the willing spirit so typical of primary students. Most children were able to explain their costumes and country of origin, sometimes including details related to climate, customs, work or recreation. We worked with dedication to be well prepared to present the *UN Convention of the Rights of the Child*. Memorization is a task the children accept gladly; some with an appetite for a larger part. After our own circle time, we joined the Intermediate Class to present our recitation. The day was full of pleasure with a delicious buffet, outdoor play, and indoor activities. We played a game called *Taking Responsibility* by dividing into groups to problem-solve how to survive with a short list of necessities. This game centred on the fundamental needs of people and we used strategies to decide priorities, to regroup, to negotiate and come to an agreeable conclusion. Time was given, with Eileen's direction, for reflection on how wealth and poverty are spread over the world and we had the opportunity to give our insight on these concerns and to listen to the wisdom of many voices, both young and maturing. Later we played children's games and, again, at the end of the day, we presented our recitation for the parents who were there for dismissal. All of us are grateful for the support of the parents who help make U.N. Day a day to remember with special thanks to Diana Nesbitt and her crew of enthusiastic helpers.

BBMH MISSION STATEMENT

Boundary Bay Montessori House will offer a quality educational program for children that remains true to the spirit of Dr. Montessori's philosophy of education to help equip them with the tools necessary to become independent adults while allowing their unique personalities to unfold.

To be surprised, to wonder, is to begin to understand.

Jose Ortega Y Gasset

highly capable guidance of the teachers at Boundary Bay Montessori House. Teachers or Directress's who have helped to nurture and educate my children while counseling and assisting me and Andy as parents. Showing me and calming me when I wanted to see 'product', when I wanted to guarantee 'results' and when I wanted to know that the decision we made with our minds, hearts and pocket books to register our children (and I mean family) at Boundary Bay Montessori was the right one.

Recently, my daughter Sally who is now in Grade 9 attended our school to shadow me for the day. Unfortunately, it was my administration day which is not as much fun to watch as is teaching. On the other hand, she was welcomed into the preschool to work with Jana and Andrea in the morning and had a wonderful time with the students there. In the afternoon she was in the Primary class with Cathy. A few nights later she asked if I would edit her language assignment. This is what I read. I share it with you as an example of what I mean about the blessings and the intangible benefits that I see in my children and of course, in your children at Boundary Bay Montessori House. This essay lends credibility to the statement that Montessori education 'prepares students for life'.

A Slice of Life

In a small Montessori school on the outskirts of Vancouver, a class of six, seven and eight year olds were having some problems respecting their classmates and keeping an orderly, respectful classroom. The teacher of this classroom was always one to have great ideas for her class. So she decided to get her classroom to put together a sort of treaty or class agreement. All the children put in their ideas about what they thought their classroom should be like. Some children said everyone should be friendly and helpful. Other children said everyone should be polite and consid-

erate. But each child agreed that everyone should be respectful. And so, once the whole classroom had agreed on one statement to be their "rule of the classroom", the teacher typed out the statement and made it ready to be signed by each of the children.

On November 3, I went with my mother to this school for the national event for grade nines: Take Your Kid To Work Day. I think the name is self-explanatory. In the afternoon my mom asked me to sit in with the age six, seven and eight classroom. This was the same day that the teacher had the agreement ready and all the children were to sign it. The teacher called everyone to a circle and reminded them of the nature of the agreement

"We, the primary classroom, believe it is most important to have a peaceful classroom. We agree that everyone should be polite, gracious, helpful, considerate, friendly and, above all, respectful of the classroom and our fellow classmates. Now, if you agree with this statement you can sign your name below it... however, there is no obligation. If you don't agree with it you do not have to sign." explained the teacher.

As she passed the agreement to the first child in the circle, a small seven-year-old girl raised her hand and said, in a very seven-year-old way,

"I think that everyone should know that if you don't agree with the statement then you don't have to sign it."

I smiled on the inside at the typical way that seven-year-olds repeat what was just said, purely so they can hear there own voice. But she wasn't finished.

"Because no one will be mad with you if you decide not to. And it's better to tell the truth than to lie, so no one will be mad at you. People will trust you more that way."

When I heard those mature words coming from such an immature voice, I thought about how everyone talks about how our generation is made up of the adults of the future. I thought about how,

when you teach a child not just the right thing to do in order for everyone to be happy with them, but also teach them to do what they know is right with themselves, you are teaching them more than a lot of adults know. It made me wonder what it would be like if all of our worlds' seven-year-olds had the same morals and ethics as adults do, and I imagined what our future could be. However, most seven-year-olds don't know this much. But in this classroom they seem to.

And then I extended this thought to how this idea relates to peer-pressure; you could say yes to what someone is asking you, you can do what everyone wants you to do, you can do what will make everyone happy. But this isn't always what is right for you. So instead you could say no. Maybe people will think you're a loser, or you're no fun or maybe, instead, they will respect you for having the strength to stand up for what is right for you. Regardless of these things, you will know inside that you were true to yourself.

...Another Montessori moment – Dr. Montessori said "The child is the father of the man". I see it everyday.

Lize Hart—Academic Director

News from the Board of MIND 2004/05 Administrative Structure

In the spirit of on going communication I thought it would be appropriate to describe some of the administrative changes we've rolled out this year. This was reviewed at the AGM, but recognizing that not everyone in our community was able to attend you may not have been fully informed of our changes.

This year we've established a new administrative model whereby the former Principal function has been split into two functions: the Academic Director and the Business Manager. To keep matters simple the role of the Academic Director

is to manage the academic aspects of BBMH and nurture the Montessori environment within our community. The role of the Business Manager is to manage the various business aspects of BBMH with particular emphasis on bringing awareness of Montessori and BBMH outside of our community to the larger community with an objective of extending our reach and driving enrolment.

As you are aware two members of our teaching staff, Lize Hart (Directress, Primary class) and Barbara Hofmann (Directress, Intermediate class supported by Eileen and French), have dual responsibility this year as Lize is also our Academic Director and Barbara is also our Business Manager. Because of their dual responsibilities Lize has had to arrange the classroom time in such a way that enables her and Barb to fulfill their classroom and administrative responsibilities.

Lize continues to be the Directress of the Primary classroom and is in the classroom everyday except Wednesday and one Friday each month. When Lize is in the classroom she is assisted by Cathy Goss (Directress, Primary classroom) on Tuesdays and Thursdays. When Lize is performing her AD role Cathy Goss is the Directress of the Primary classroom on Wednesdays and Barb Hoffman or Cathy Goss is the Directress of the Primary classroom one Friday a month. On Wednesday mornings Cathy Goss receives assistance from Barbara in the afternoon and Cathy von Ende (a volunteer who is taking her Montessori training) in the morning.

In addition, Barbara is a Directress of the Intermediate classroom on Tuesdays, assists Eileen in the Intermediate classroom on

Wednesday morning and teaches French and assists Cathy Goss with the Primary students by teaching French on Wednesday afternoons.

Lize has done an excellent job developing the staffing plan that provides that careful balance of continuity in the classroom and the ability for staff to carry out multiple responsibilities. I hope that this communication has provided you with greater clarity regarding the staffing and administrative dynamics at BBMH.

Sincerely,

On behalf of Montessori in Delta Society, Jeff von Ende
President of the Board

Family Fun Fair and Feast This occasion has been postponed until January.

Gordon Neufeld at the Genesis Theatre November 18 Ladner Partners in Education (of which BBMH is a member) is hosting Gordon Neufeld at the Genesis Theatre from 7-9 pm. He will address: "Why Parents Matter". Tickets are \$12 each or two for \$20, and can be ordered from Diana Nesbitt at 604-943-1823.

Holiday Hamper We will be delivering a holiday hamper to a needy South Delta family on the last day of classes. A family profile with ages of children will be posted at both entry doors.

Please sign up for items appropriate for the family members.

Thank You A big thanks to Tracy

Dodd for creating such a beautiful scrapbook of the photos from the building of the school.

FUNDRAISING

Fundraising plays an integral role in the school. The nature and amount of fundraising activities are carefully considered so as to avoid pressure on families to buy things they don't need.

Bottle Returns BBMH has accounts at both the Ladner and Tsawwassen depots.

Thrifty Foods Certificate order forms are always available. Please see Cara Jean Morrison.

Organics The BBMH Organics Program offers both a fundraising opportunity for the school as well as a wonderful way to purchase your organic produce through a local grower, Snow Farms. Each Monday a Fresh Sheet will be distributed by e-mail or hard copy on the school bulletin board. Fill out your orders and submit by return e-mail or in the Organics mail box at the school by TUESDAY at 3:00. You can pick up your fresh veggies on Friday after school at the front entrance. To receive your Fresh Sheet via e-mail, please contact Leslie Kanerva at llkanerva@telus.net or phone 604-948-2380.

