



FALL 2019  
VOLUME 5 ISSUE 1



# cmh connections

## UPCOMING EVENTS

### October

- 10 **Parent Workshop - CMH 101**  
Guest Speaker: Lisa Tompkins  
9:00am and 5:00pm
- 14 **No School, Teacher In-Service Day**  
**Family Fall Foliage Fest**  
10:00am-12:00pm
- 27 **CMH Open House**  
2:00-4:00pm
- 28 **PP Parent & Child Class Visit**  
3:00-4:00pm  
**JR Parent & Child Class Visit**  
4:00-5:00pm

### November

- 7 **Conferences**  
11:30am - Dismissal All Students
- 8 **No School - Conferences**
- 15 **Parent Workshop - Self Regulation**  
Guest Speaker: Abby McKenzie  
9:00am and 4:00pm
- 22 **CMH Turkey Trot**
- 26 **JR Thanksgiving Feast/Family Dessert**  
**SR Thanksgiving Feast**
- 27-29 **No School/Thanksgiving Break**

### December

- 3 **Family Astronomy Night**  
6:30pm
- 20 **Last Day of School Before Winter Break**  
8:30-11:30am - JR & SR Holiday Celebration  
11:30am - Dismissal All Students  
12:00-2:00pm - Staff Holiday Luncheon  
12:00-2:00pm - PACT Skating Party
- 21-Jan 5 **No School - Winter Break**

For up-to-date information, follow CMH on



## LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR

CMH Community,

Before the first day of school the staff work behind the scenes to create “prepared classroom environments” specific to the age level and needs of the children they serve. I have recently realized many people do not know or understand much of the “Montessori Lingo” that is shared in parent- teacher conferences or even a simple email communication about a child doing a “work” in the “Sensorial area”. This year I hope to find creative ways to introduce many of the language and practices that are fundamental in a Montessori education. Parents, you too are now being challenged to ask teachers what a term means or why a certain process or practice may appear rigid or not of importance to you.

Let’s look at the term **PREPARED ENVIRONMENT**, that was mentioned above.

Dr. Maria Montessori’s “prepared environment” is vital to her educational method. The developmental needs of each child are met from the child-size furniture to the shelves bursting with “works” sequenced from left to right and top to bottom in each curriculum area. This environment allows for success and independence with appropriate materials and tools, along with giving each child the freedom to explore or observe all of the things going on around them in their aesthetically beautiful space. Each classroom community prides themselves in returning materials back to the very shelf they initially chose it from, cleaning up an accidental spill with the sponge or floor towel, or pushing their chair back in to keep their classroom neat and tidy. If these same children were placed in a different classroom that was not a “prepared environment” the results would not be the same calm, busy, purposeful classroom communities that allow our students to thrive.

There are a wealth of resources available in our Parent Library in the CMH lobby if you would like to learn more about Montessori education. You will also find that most Montessori teachers relish in sharing their practice with others, after all they studied it for multiple years prior to delving into their careers guiding children. It continues to be a joy for me to spend time in our classrooms at CMH or give a tour and share this special place with others. I hope you all feel welcome, because you are each a valued member of our community whether it is your 1st or 25th year at CMH.

Casey Reed  
CMH Director

## NEWS FROM PP1

Our school year is off to a wonderful beginning here in PP1, and we are so excited to be sharing this time with your child. All of the children are busy learning or remembering the rules and routines of the classroom. We are spending this time at the beginning of the year helping the children get to know each other and get to know their teachers so that we can become a community of friends. We know the best learning happens when everyone is happy and comfortable!

One of the things we began doing a few years ago to help us start off our day is dancing together. We call this dancing our "Morning Moves," and each song is designed to help us all get our brain, body, and spirit connected and balanced and ready to learn. One song is designed to get our energy level up and then we follow up with another song to help us settle and relax that energy. If your child hasn't mentioned this to you yet, try asking him or her to show you the "Hook-Up" move—a great exercise to center and refresh ourselves before we start our work for the day. We are looking forward to a great year ahead and watching your child grow and learn each day!

Kim, Michelle, and Jeanne



## NEWS FROM PP2

PP2 is off to a great start this year! The children are learning the expectations and routines of the classroom. At this time, our main goal is to help them develop a work cycle. This includes choosing work from the shelf, using the work for its intended purpose, cleaning it up, taking it back to the proper place on the shelf and transitioning to the next work with little teacher guidance. The two most active areas of the environment right now are the practical life and sensorial areas. This is what we love to see and let us explain why.

The practical life area is meant to allow for independence since most children feel comfortable at a young age choosing works from this shelf. It allows for coordination, meaning the children begin to learn to carry the trays, pour (without spilling potentially) and carry heavy pitchers of water among other things. It also allows for concentration. Many children coming into the class are able to concentrate on something that seems fun and exciting like pouring, spooning, tonging or tweezing, and then they move into bigger things like table scrubbing and floor scrubbing. These works all help build concentration for the bigger academic works. The materials also allow for order. The shelves and each work are organized in a way that everything is left to right and top to bottom to prepare their eyes for reading. So if your child picks up a spooning work, the beans are on the left side and transferred to the right...also meant to teach your child to cross the midline which is using both side of your brain at the same time! There are so many other hidden aims or goals in the practical life area, which is why it is so unique and important to the Montessori environment.

In conclusion, we are enjoying watching your children come into the classroom each day to begin with the foundation of the Montessori experience. If your child is a second or third level, we love to watch them experience these areas from a different perspective, and at each age level they learn something new and see something they did not see before. It is often very magical to see! We are really looking forward to a wonderful year with your children.

Megan, Andrea and Marlis



## NEWS FROM PP3

The PP3 class is having a great start to the school year. All of the children are enjoying many works that are stimulating and interesting to them. Our new, first-level children are settling into the routines of the day. This is everything from how to enter the hall and take care of their backpack and shoes to how to choose works and have snack. They are drawn to the Practical Life and Sensorial materials that help them learn how to do many things. With works such as pouring water, ordering the pink tower, and spooning not only are children learning the processes but also they are developing independence, concentration and organization skills. Building these skills is their primary work for the year because they lay the groundwork for all they will do in the future.

For the older and returning children, renewing friendships and making new friends is as important as finding works. Developing grace and courtesy and social skills are a natural goal for this age. The children are also driven by an internal desire to challenge their skills and continue to develop their knowledge. Multi-step Practical Life works (scrubbing, for instance) and creating patterns with the Pink Tower and other Sensorial materials along with the next step in math, language, science, and geography become their focus. Each child learns at their own pace guided by their interests such as a need to count all the chains or a love for writing words and stories with the moveable alphabet. It is a wonder to watch all of this occur. Now is the perfect time to come observe or volunteer to help in the classroom.

Theresa, Birte and Anne



## NEWS FROM JUNIOR SOUTH

Junior South is off to a quick start this year, and it has been exciting to build our Montessori community. The first several weeks of school are full of activities which promote positivity, mindfulness, team-building, and community. We hope that the hard work of both teachers and students during our first month of the school year will prove fruitful the whole year round. Our class has been working to establish classroom routines and modeling such behavior for younger students. Mindfulness practice began during the first week of class and continues on through the practice of guided meditations. These experiences, which are designed for children, encourage the understanding of their feelings without judgement, provide them tools to listen to their emotions, and increase their emotional intelligence as well.

From cooking, to taking care of our animals, and gardening, there is nothing that the children of Junior South haven't experienced. Practical life activities take on a bit of a different life in the elementary program, with the goal of providing children with the roadwork of how to tackle everyday tasks. Our Grow Lab has been full of herbs and vegetables from which we have propagated new plants. Doing so has provided us with a bountiful selection of ingredients for our weekly cooking projects which promote literacy, math, and teambuilding skills. Our children have also been working to bring our Junior patio and garden space to life as well. A few times per week, a small group of children or the entire class lend a helping hand to weed, water, transplant, begin propagation work, and fill bird feeders. Our children use a mixture of vinegar, salt, blue dish soap, and water to help manage the weeds. We hope you have had a chance to admire our work during the Back to School picnic or from the playground.

Todd and Anne



## NEWS FROM JUNIOR NORTH

These last several weeks we have been spending lots of time getting to know our first level students as well as catching up with our second and third level friends. We have been practicing our classroom routines and asked that our returning students model them and help out the new first levels.

We have taken time to practice our growth mindset and using the Calm app to do guided meditation with the kids. This app is great for the kids to practice being able to listen to their bodies, breathe deep, and relax. When we watched the growth mindset videos, we used "Class Dojo". It helps the children to realize that you may not know how to do something yet, but with practice and time, you just might do more than you ever thought you could.

This year we are doing something a little different for cultural than we have for the past several years. Anne, Todd, and Jessica are all teaching cultural lessons. Anne has been teaching the children History. Todd has been giving Zoology lessons, and Jessica is teaching Geography. Each of the teachers are enjoying their roles in the cultural area.

This year has had such a great start, and we hope this momentum continues all year long.

Jessica and Nicki



## NEWS FROM SENIORS

We begin each year with student interviews and self-portraits. The children took turns introducing their classmates to each other. The sixth levels started the year off with a bang—The Big Bang! They presented Montessori's Great Lessons, with the experiments, to both the Junior and Senior classes.

Every year we look forward to Creek Day the first week of school. Hiking down, looking for fossils, getting wet, playing with clay and catching critters make for a full day of fun. Jeanne Berter, our butterfly queen, collected enough monarch butterfly eggs for each of our Senior students to raise one. The students took the responsibility of feeding and cleaning cages very seriously. Their curiosity was peaked as they watched their butterfly go through the metamorphosis process. The butterfly release was thrilling, as always.

For our first field trip, we spent the day on the Ohio River. We did many experiments to test for water quality. The students rotated through different stations in which they learned about different aspects of testing the health of the river. We always enjoy our trip up and down the river as we conduct our experiments.

John and Dana  
Intern: Lisa



# PARENT WORKSHOPS



**CMH Montessori 101**  
Lisa Tompkins  
October 10, 9am and 5pm sessions

*If your child is approaching the elementary years or if you want to learn more about Montessori education then join us for CMH 101, a Parent Education Workshop to see just what CMH's elementary program is all about. With an easy-to-digest overview of Montessori Philosophy and how it is embraced here at CMH, we will explore the elementary curriculum and share just how we build a community of life-long learners here at CMH.*

**Self Regulation**  
Abby McKenzie  
November 15, 9am and 4pm sessions

*This workshop provides families with a basic understanding of all the sensory systems, under-responsiveness versus over-responsiveness, and how sensory process impacts self regulation.*



## LETTER FROM THE BOARD

CMH Community,

We're over six weeks into the 2019-20 school year, and the kids, teachers and staff have settled back into their routines. It's exciting to see the personal growth of the children, and the rest of us are growing and learning along with them.

In this letter last year, I talked about a few notable projects happening at the school—completing the tie-in to the Loveland sewer system, reclamation of the pond and interior facilities upgrades. I'm pleased to report that each of these projects was completed as expected, and the school is looking great! Your Board has approved a budget for this school year that projects we'll be operating with a modestly cashflow positive financial plan. This is ideal for a small, non-profit organization, as we want to ensure we can maintain a healthy cash reserve so we can manage a "lean year" or larger capital project without disrupting the normal operations of the school.

Our marketing work has produced exceptionally high interest in CMH. We started this school year with a completely full Pre-Primary program, a waiting list for this year, and several families who have already committed for the 2020-21 school year. As always, the best marketing tool of all is your endorsement of CMH as a trusted friend, neighbor or family member. I'm sure each of you knows families with young children about to start their pre-school years. I encourage you to share your experience with those families so CMH can at least be on their radar screen as they select a school.

In addition to the evergreen priority of ensuring CMH provides an outstanding education and experience for our children (and their families), our Board priorities continue to be:

**Fiscal Discipline** – This includes not only regular reviews of costs, but also includes working with Casey to evaluate options to improve new student recruitment and current student retention.

**Facilities Maintenance** – Our focus is on long-term planning and budgeting for preventative maintenance, periodic major replacements (e.g. roof, HVAC, etc.) and general beautification of the buildings and grounds.

**Board Renewal** – We are nearing a point where several of our long-standing Board members will be retiring, so we are actively looking for new members to join the Board during this school year. If you have an interest, please get in touch with Casey, and we'll get started with the (very painless) application process.

We appreciate your commitment to CMH. We encourage you to look for more ways to get involved. Please continue actively supporting CMH—your teachers and the staff—and please support CMH by using your voice to tell your friends and neighbors what an awesome place CMH is for your children...and could be for theirs!

  
John Chevalier  
CMH Board President

## NATURE NOTES

We have had about a month together so far and we have accomplished a lot! New CMH students are getting acquainted with the "Outdoor Classroom," and just as with works on the shelves in the "Indoor Classrooms," students are discovering the many features around our campus: bird feeding stations, the birdblind, various gardens, compost, trails, ponds, woods, meadows, and more. They are learning how to change into their outdoor gear, to use a soft voice outdoors to not frighten wildlife, how to quietly freeze if a bee is near, and to stay with the group as we amble about during Nature Study.

New and returning students alike have explored decomposition in the woods, in our schoolyard compost, and discussed factors that can speed or slow this natural process. Juniors spent 2 weeks studying geologic time, change, and Ordovician fossils that can be found here. Seniors went on a watershed walk covering several miles to determine features that contribute to a healthy watershed. In the next week or so, all students will plant a personal radish garden that will be tended in the Grow Labs in each classroom. We will predict what type of soil medium grows the biggest plants and end our botanical study with a Radish Party!

Enjoy the Outdoors!

  
Veronica Brannen  
CMH Naturalist