



NOVEMBER 2016

GIVE THANKS

FAMILY • FRIENDS • GRATITUDE

At a glance . . .

- 11/9 Father's Night for Primary Classes
- 11/11 NO SCHOOL for students
Teacher Work Day
- 11/21 Fall Conference Schedule
emailed
- 11/22 Grandparent's/Special Friend's
Day for Primary Classes
- 11/23-11/25 THANKSGIVING BREAK
- 11/30 Studio Conference & Showcase
- 12/1-12/ 1 Parent Teacher Conferences

"When we adults think of children there is a simple truth which we ignore: childhood is not preparation for life; childhood is life. a child isn't getting ready to live; a child is living.

from *Notes on an Unhurried Journey*
by John A. Taylor, 1991

Community and Children's Garden

by Bekke Howell

As many of you are already aware, I spent my first two years out of college working in the Peace Corps. I was stationed in a small village in Côte d'Ivoire, West Africa. One of the aspects of living overseas that made the greatest impression on me was the sense of community. Not only did everyone work together to watch out for each other and each other's children, but they went out of their ways to welcome and to care for me. I was always astounded by how generous and welcome the villagers were to me from day one, welcoming me into their community, helping orient me to local customs, and bringing me food any chance they got. I was a stranger to them, and yet they always helped me out, never questioning why they should do so. I would bike to a nearby village, and the village chief would invite me for lunch, killing a chicken and purchasing the best palm wine the village had to offer. I would show up in a different village at nightfall, and a local nurse would open his house to me, giving up his own bed for me to use. I do not imagine that I would encounter the same open generosity here, in the United States.

Last weekend's auction reminded me that I have indeed found that same sense of community, right here in the middle of Denver. Angelina's study of community has brought our awareness of it to the surface. However, I believe that it has been here all along. My first experience with this community came long before I was either a parent or a staff member at Children's Garden. My best friend worked as a teacher here. As we had been colleagues and shared similar philosophies about Montessori teaching, she would often discuss with me the wonderful elements of the school that made it an ideal place, in her opinion, to work. At the time, I was pregnant with twins and looking forward to staying home with my children for a while. My pregnancy ended suddenly and tragically, as some pregnancies do, with one of my daughters stillborn and the other in the hospital on a ventilator, 11 weeks premature. As my husband and I tried to figure out how to cope, my friend rushed to our sides. She had shared our story with the parents in her classroom, and one of them immediately went home and brought her a top-of-the-line breast pump, which would allow me to keep my milk supply up and nourish my small infant. She proceeded to loan to it to me, a complete stranger, for however long I should need it. It was a small gesture, to be sure, but a very meaningful one to my husband and me. When I look back on the incident, I realize what a warm, inclusive community Children's Garden truly is and always has been.

My daughter flourished and at barely two years old, we enrolled her in the toddler program at Children's Garden Montessori. We could not imagine enrolling her anywhere else. This school offered her both the Montessori teachings that we found important to her formation and a short yet structured program lead by highly trained teachers. We were all amazed by the deeper feeling of community that the school brought into our lives. The staff was supportive and enthusiastic. They remembered who we were from our relationship with my friend who had since left the school and made us feel welcome.

Every parent that we encountered had a different connection to the school, a different reason for choosing it for their child. Veteran parents were welcoming and eager to show new comers the ropes. There were opportunities to get involved. There were opportunities not only to meet other families, but also to support the academic side of the school. Tradition was honored, yet change was ever present and welcome. Parents felt empowered when their ideas were considered. Not every suggestion was put into action, but they were all considered and open to discourse.

Almost 15 years later, I am delighted to see that strong sense of community and collaboration between parents and staff still exist. My role has changed greatly from participating parent to overseeing director. Yet, the palpable sense of community constantly reminds me of what a special place this has always been, and hopefully will continue to be. The faces on both sides of the gates may continue to change over the years, but the special feeling this schools evokes in me will no doubt continue for years to come! Thank you all for your willingness to keep the community a reality.



Surely, two of the most satisfying experiences in life must be those of being a grandchild or a grandparent.

Donald A. Norberg

Grandparent's and Special Friend's Day

Tuesday, November 24th

DROP IN BETWEEN 8:15 - 11:15 am or 1:30 - 3:00 pm
XP morning or afternoon

Grandparents' Day provides an opportunity for the children in the Primary (3-6) classes to proudly share their school with their grandparents, a special aunt or uncle, or another special guest. It is an informal occasion where the visitors will have a chance to work with the children in the classrooms as well as the art studio. Parents are welcome to come if your child does not have another guest. This event is always well-attended and we don't want anyone to feel left out. If your child's grandparents or special friends are not able to attend, we encourage you to schedule a visit when they are available.

REQUEST INFORMATION

Extended Primary Information Night

Thursday, November 3rd

6:00 - 7:00 pm

If you are interested in learning more about the Extended Primary Program at Children's Garden, you are encouraged to attend this meeting. Michelle and Vida will discuss all of the details, benefits, and expectations of the program.

Please rsvp to xp@cgmontessori.com if you plan to attend.

Your child's natural rhythm is much slower than yours.

*from Montessori and Your Child
by Terri Mallory*



Father's Night

Wednesday, November 9th

5:30-6:30 pm - Morning Primary Classes

6:00-7:00 pm - Afternoon Primary Classes

XP either time

Dads or special friends are invited to *join the children* in their classrooms to try your hand at some of the "works" they have told you about. The children delight in giving an adult a lesson on a work they have mastered! There is also opportunity for a studio experience. Be prepared to sit on the floor and in our child-size chairs.

The Hundred Languages of Children

The child
is made of one hundred.
The child has
a hundred languages
a hundred hands
a hundred thoughts
a hundred ways of thinking
of playing, of speaking.

A hundred always a hundred
ways of listening
of marveling of loving
a hundred joys
for singing and understanding
to discover
a hundred worlds
to dream.

The child has
a hundred languages
(and a hundred, hundred,
hundred more)
but they steal ninety-nine.
The school and the culture
separate the head from the body.

They tell the child:
to think without hands
to do without head
to listen and not to speak
to understand without joy
to love and to marvel
only at Easter and Christmas.
They tell the child:
to discover the world already
there
and of the hundred
they steal ninety-nine.

They tell the child:
that work and play
reality and fantasy
science and imagination
sky and earth
reason and dream
are things
that do not belong together.
And thus they tell the child
that the hundred is not there.
The child says:
No way. The hundred is there.

Conferences are just around the corner !

Mark Your Calendar

Studio Group Conference
Wednesday, November 30th
5:30 to 7:00 pm

Angelina will be in the studio to share what your children have been experiencing through the different languages of art. She has prepared a presentation that will be *followed by time for questions and discussion.*

You will receive your invitation soon!

(Adults only event)

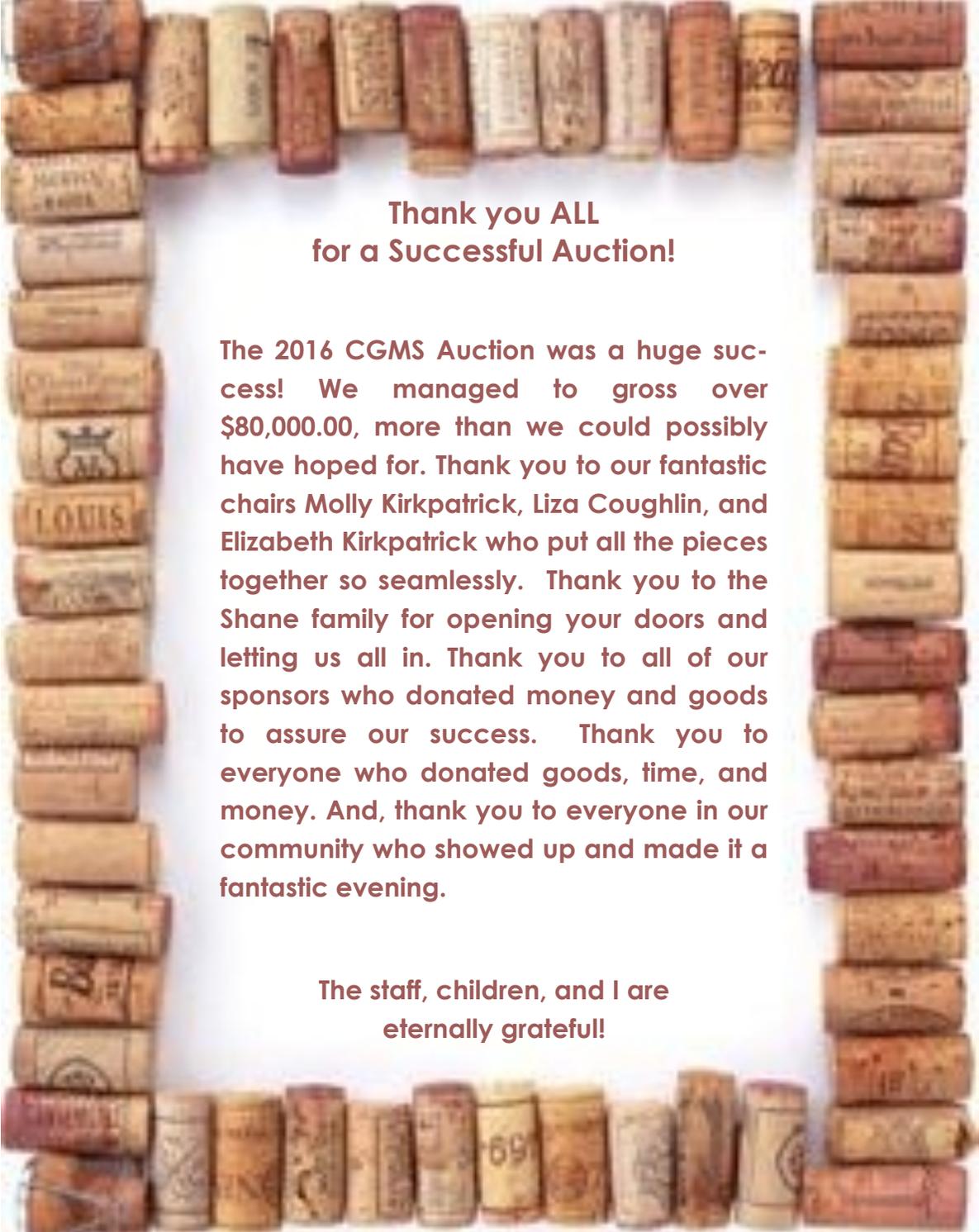
Individual Classroom Conferences

Thursday 12/1 and Friday 12/2

Please keep these dates open for the conference with your child's teacher. The schedule will be emailed the second week of November. Hours of preparation go into these thoughtful, detailed observations that give you a perspective on your child in our community.



Please remember that we set these two days aside for conferences so the teachers don't have to use additional personal time at lunch or after school to meet with you.



**Thank you ALL
for a Successful Auction!**

The 2016 CGMS Auction was a huge success! We managed to gross over \$80,000.00, more than we could possibly have hoped for. Thank you to our fantastic chairs Molly Kirkpatrick, Liza Coughlin, and Elizabeth Kirkpatrick who put all the pieces together so seamlessly. Thank you to the Shane family for opening your doors and letting us all in. Thank you to all of our sponsors who donated money and goods to assure our success. Thank you to everyone who donated goods, time, and money. And, thank you to everyone in our community who showed up and made it a fantastic evening.

**The staff, children, and I are
eternally grateful!**