



October 2015

## From the Head of School Building Community

Bekke Howell

Last weekend was our staff retreat. We were fortunate this year to be able to attend a Montessori conference as a group, thus earning important continuing education hours on top of our usual opportunity to gather together as a staff. Conferences are always a great way to learn new techniques, to remind ourselves of why we do what we do, and to revisit our Montessori roots. However, at the end of the day, it is not the conference that brings us together as a staff, but the down time that we spend together as people that makes retreats vital to our community.

As a staff, we have been on many retreats together. Sometimes, we travel far into the mountains and have fantastic adventures. Other times, we stay close to home, coming together for meetings or workshops and then going home to our respective beds at the end of the day. No matter the theme or the location, the most successful retreats are

those where we have time to just be with each other. When we sit around the fire, drinking wine, snacking, and talking. In order to build community, people need to see the humanity in others. As we find common ground and learn about each other's experiences, we grow closer.

Last night, I was watching Survivor with my family. Survivor is our guilty pleasure. Usually, there is nothing noteworthy to bring away from the experience. However, this season is about people who previously were on the show and have been given the opportunity to play again. There has been a lot of talk about Old School and New School. The newer contestants are all about strategy, hiding in the bushes and plotting out alliances. The older contestants are all about community, coming together to build shelter, to cook, and to just spend time together. The newer, younger contestants gleefully plotted out their trajectory to win, confident-

ly scoffing at the old ways. The older contestants gathered together, talked, and built relationships. In the end, the new

### Dates to Remember

#### OCTOBER 2015

- 10/7** Childcare Provider Visiting Day  
10:00 am & 1:30pm
- 10/12** NO SCHOOL  
Teacher Work Day
- 10/20** Navigating What Comes Next  
10:00—11:15 am  
2:00-3:15 pm
- 10/21** Open House for Prospective Parents  
4:30-5:30 pm
- 10/29** Navigating What Comes Next  
10:00—11:15 am  
2:00-3:15 pm



Details for these events are included within or on the attached calendar.

contestants found themselves on the chopping block, shocked to discover too late that time invested in building relationships was time well spent after all.

Community is one of the elements that makes Children's Garden special. School is a place where children come and have their own community. Walk into any classroom at our school, and you will find children engaged in conversations with each other, their teachers, and any person who happens to wander by. As a staff, we spend many hours collaborating on curriculum, sharing educational goals, and problem-solving. Parents chat at the gate with teachers and each other, sharing information and asking for advice. Embracing this element, we happily open our doors to the parent community, welcoming you in to read, cook, or just spent time in the classroom. Understanding that all of you are busy people, and that many of you work outside the home, we try to plan events at a variety of times. Evening activities like Mother's or Father's Night are great times to come in as well.

Next month, the school will be hosting its annual Community Event, thanks to all the hard work of our co-chairs Kelly Eisinger and Julie Dorkin and their committee members. This is a great opportunity to come together for wine, hors d'oeuvres, and conversation. All the items up for buying are community based—parties for children and parents. Not only should you all plan on attending and on signing up for party spots, but also, please feel free to volunteer to help out with some of the preplanning activities. We can always use the extra help and welcome that in whatever form works best for you.

As a school, we value community and believe that the best way to increase it is to build connections. Our upstairs is coming together beautifully and we hope that it can be a space where our staff can continue to accomplish beautiful work. Additionally, we would love to see it become a space where parents can come together to talk and to bond. If you have ideas of ways you envision this happening, please feel free to stop by and let me know. My door is always open. Come on in and pull up a chair!

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## **“Touching Base” Phone Calls**

We hope by this time in the year, the children are happy at school and beginning to know the routines and expectations, feel they have a friend or two or three, and a teacher who is always available.



To check on that, each of the teachers will be touching base with you via phone to share a bit with you about your children, and hear how you feel they are doing at school. These phone calls have been called “Six-Week Phone Calls” for years, but it can take a good two weeks for a teacher to get through her list, so we ask for your patience. They are not meant to be a full parent-teacher conference, but instead, simply a time for us to tell you briefly how your child is doing at school, and answer any questions you might have.

Some of our teachers have a Sign Up Genius set up for you to schedule your call. If you are unavailable at the time of the call, please let the teacher know if you would like them to call back and the best time to do so.

## Caregiver's Visiting Day Wednesday, October 7th 10:00 am and 1:30 pm



Care providers are an important part of the children's lives. Children's Garden would like to welcome all care providers and give them an insight to what we do here at school. When we work consistently together, the children benefit. This is a great time to learn more about the Montessori philosophy and hear the reasons why the children come home with their shoes on the "opposite" feet or their coats on upside down.

If you have a care provider, please invite them to come to school on the 1st of October and learn about our program. After the brief discussion, the care providers are invited to observe the classrooms.

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## Dressing for the Weather

Just a reminder from the handbook: We go outside in all types of weather. Please send your child in the appropriate attire, i.e. rain coats, rain boots, winter coats, gloves or mittens, snow boots, sun hats, sunglasses, etc.

***There is no such thing as bad weather - just bad clothing!***

We realize these cool fall mornings and warm summer-like afternoons can be challenging. **LAYER!** Remember to **label your child's clothing** and we will do our best to make sure your child, with frequent reminders, returns with what he or she came with.

It's also a good time to swap out your child's change of clothes from the summer attire from the beginning of school to warmer options.



to Emily Stone for the delicious blueberry scones you made for the staff; two Jackson families—Jaylen and Noland—for taking care of our pets over summer break; Sarah Weily for the yummy Chipotle burritos she so generously delivered to the staff for lunch. These are only a few of the wonderful things our community does to make this the best school to be a part of—anywhere.



## Navigating What Comes Next for Your Child

Join Bekke and Jamie for coffee and tea to chat about the next step in your child's educational journey. Our discussion will include tips to consider as you investigate and plan for the future.

**Tuesday, October 20th 10:00 - 11:00 am    Thursday, October 29th 2:00 - 3:00 pm**

Please **RSVP** [jboes@cgmontessori](mailto:jboes@cgmontessori) or [bhowell@cgmontessori.com](mailto:bhowell@cgmontessori)

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### From Zach's Place

I am the proud mama of two boys (is a tenth grader still classified as a boy?). When my fellas first started school away from me, I remember feeling like they had entered the lost hours of my day. I didn't know what they did and when I asked them I generally got the standard answer, "Nothing". At Children's Garden we strive to make the school hours transparent. I regularly post snippets of studio life on a **studio blog**, [Nature and Child](#), [Child and Nature](#), [Nature as Child](#), [Child as Nature](#).



Nature and Child. Child and Nature.  
Nature as Child. Chi...

What is it?

and we often post photos, links and other communications on our **Facebook** page (<https://www.facebook.com/Childrens-Garden-Montessori-School-213121868829154/timeline/>), plus classroom teachers send out regular **newsletters**. We encourage you to follow the **blog** and like us on **Facebook** to enjoy a window onto your child's day at school.

Happy Autumn,  
Angelina, Your Studio Teacher

## Holidays at Children's Garden

Witches may remain in the wardrobe, lions in their dens, and superheroes may take the day off. **You won't see Halloween costumes at school** and you won't have to worry about bringing mass quantities of Valentines for all the children.



Large group "holiday projects", directed by an adult, may overlook or overwhelm the individual child. At school we prefer to observe holidays in a "low key" manner. We try to incorporate conversations about how holidays are observed by different families and cultures. Individual art work, stories, songs and cooking projects also reflect the holiday in the class. With so much activity outside of school revolving around various holidays, we try to maintain an environment in which the exploration of activities, in a calm atmosphere, is provided for the children.

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We have scheduled **OPEN HOUSE** dates for prospective families on **Wednesday, October 21st at 4:30 pm**, and **Saturday, November 7th at 10:00 and 11:30 am**. Please remind your friends and family who are interested in applying to Children's Garden to visit our website - [www.cgmontessori.com](http://www.cgmontessori.com) - and schedule to attend. We will be accepting on-line applications from November to February 10th for enrollment in August 2016.



## Visit the School

The first 6 weeks of school have almost passed and the time when you can visit your child's class begins October 5th. They love to share their environment, routine, and interests with you. You are welcome to stay for the entire class time, but if you are unable to do that, we suggest you arrange to come after the class is in session and stay until dismissal. Please call Catherine Ramey at 303.322.0972 or email [cramey@cgmontessori.com](mailto:cramey@cgmontessori.com) to schedule your visit.

