

Fall Conference

Online registration is available for our
November 7th Fall Conference
at Madonna University!

President's Corner

Dear Montessorians,

Welcome Back! It is an exciting time of year. The beginning of every school year is full of opportunity and new possibilities. It is the time of year when we see lovely returning faces and new faces full of promise for the amazing journey ahead. The board is the same way. We say hello to returning members and new members alike. We have elected officers, assigned committee chairs and formed new committees to get to work for Montessori and our membership. We look forward to the opportunities the year will hold.

Our first seminar of the year sounds rewarding and full of great information. Sarah Werner Andrews is a dynamic speaker and Exploration: The Key to 21st Century Learning is a topic of interest to all Montessorians. We are already planning and looking forward to the Spring Seminar, too. If you have any suggestions or topics of concern for future seminars, we would love to hear from you. Our mission, to promote, develop and disseminate the educational philosophy and principles of Maria Montessori, fostering their integration with the American educational and cultural environment is important and shared by all board members. So it is important for you to let us know what you are thinking. Working together we can do the best for everyone!

As part of our goal of advocacy we continue to work toward recognition in the QRIS rating system. As you will see in other parts of our

website (Advocacy) we are making progress and learning a lot as we navigate the state bureaucracy. We are working for our members diligently.

On the website, you will also see other benefits of being a personal member and part of an affiliated school. Being part of Michigan Montessori Society is also a great way to connect and stay connected with other amazing Montessorians in Michigan! With all these benefits it is easy to see why our membership continues to grow.

So again, Welcome Back! I hope to see you at our workshops and look forward to hearing from all of you!

Here's to great things to come,
Heidi Gauger



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Fall Seminar Promises to Be Inspiring

Our Presenter:



Sarah Werner Andrews is an AMI Primary Trainer at Montessori Northwest in Portland, Oregon. She holds an M.Ed. from Loyola University, a Bachelor's Degree in Music Performance, AMI Primary and Elementary diplomas, and is an

Oregon Registry Master Trainer. In addition to teacher training at MNW, Sarah is an AMI consultant, examiner, and national presenter

Topic: Exploration: The Key to 21st Century Learning

It is well known that children learn best through experimental interaction with their environment – in other words, through exploration. Yet for teachers, exploration is often uncomfortable, messy, and asks us to question what we see and understand. It is much easier for us when children simply repeat what we have shown them, in a manner consistent with the presentation. But is this exploration, or merely simple imitation? Montessori tells us, "Our task is to show how an action is done and at the same time, destroy the possibility of imitation." Why is this so important? What does this mean for our presentations, our expectations for the children's activity, and how we guide self-construction?

During this seminar, we will become explorers ourselves, as we unpack the power of exploration as a tool for self-construction. We will re-examine key responsibilities of the adult: preparing and enriching the environment, connecting the children to the materials and activities, and withdrawing once that connection is made. We will re-imagine

how we inspire curiosity, cultivate excitement and joy in learning, and embrace the self-reflection and humility central to our work as "Guides".

Session I: "Exploration: The Key to 21st Century Learning"

This session will introduce exploration as the driving force behind a dynamic, high-functioning Montessori community. We will uncover the link between exploration and the social revolution that is Montessori Education, and begin the process of reframing our work to support how, where, and why the children must explore to realize their potential as 21st century learners.

Session II: "Supporting Exploration: Examining the Adult's Role in Self-Construction"

During this session we will examine how exploration frames three important responsibilities of the Montessori adult: cultivating our relationship with children; connecting the children with the materials and activities; and providing the structures and limits essential to constructive exploration.

Session III: "Ride the Horse in the Direction it's Going: Academic and Social Experience Go Hand in Hand."

The Sensorial area offers unmatched opportunities for exploration, essential for constructing the foundations for imagination, creativity, discernment, and reasoned judgment. The first part of this session will explore the nuances of sensorial activity, the different cognitive processes involved, and the central role that the sensorial games play in supporting those wonderful four-year olds! The second part of this session will focus on the social dimension of the children's development. We will look at exploration as it relates to the child's own social experience, as well as how children learn from, and with, each other.

Spotlight on Schools – Ferndale Montessori by Emily Meyers

Happy children and comfortable parents: That is the mission for Ferndale Montessori Center. Mary Lampard opened the school in the early eighties. She started with two classrooms, one toddler and one preprimary in a small brick building in a cozy, blue-collar neighborhood. Over the years, Ferndale the city, has grown and changed, but the school has stayed small and intimate. Before opening, Mary walked through downtown Ferndale, handing out fliers to all people pushing strollers, inviting them to come see the school. It worked. There are three classes now, serving approximately 70 children.



When Mary began the school, it offered a class for toddler age children, one of the first in the State of Michigan. A current toddler student is the daughter of one of Mary's first students, who enrolled in the program in September of 1981. And, her grandma was the first assistant in the Toddler class way back then! These days, the class has three staff members and serves 12 children on any given day, with a total of 17 enrolled.

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Meet Our Newest Board Member: Sue Szczesny



I am very happy to be the newest member of the Michigan Montessori Board. My name is **Sue Szczesny**, and I came to Montessori education first as a parent. I was a stay at home mom back in 1995 and was looking for a preschool for my oldest son. Money was tight and I am not even sure how I convinced my husband to observe the school with me but almost 20 years later I still remember the lump in my throat watching the children during work time at Birmingham Community Montessori (BCM). My husband and I made the tuition work and we never regretted our decision to send both of our boys to the school. I had over 90 credit hours at Wayne State University towards

a BS in Nursing and hoped to return to school one day to complete my degree. Instead I fell in love with the Montessori philosophy and the atmosphere of the classroom. I started my career at Birmingham Community Montessori first as a sub and then as an assistant. I took my MMTEC training in 2002 and was lucky to train with both Joyce Fruge and Shawn Gasiorowski. I interned at BCM with Anne Kern and Maureen Rudick as my mentors. In 2006, Arlene Ross, the owner, retired and I bought the small business. What did I know about running a business? Not much! Luckily, I had the foundation of a great school and the help of my friends and co-workers while I learned the ropes. I feel that my perspective as a Montessori parent, then Directress, and finally as a business owner has really helped me to be better at my job. I understand that good parents sometimes get very emotional when their children are involved. I know how hard teachers work and the dedication it takes to try to meet the needs of every child. And I have had to make some hard decisions for purely financial and business reasons. I hope my perspective will help me to represent all of the Montessori children, parents, teachers, assistants, administrators and business owners in a positive way. Now that my two sons are grown I am looking forward to using some of my free time to support and promote Montessori Education and all of you.

Spotlight, continued

The two preprimary classes serve approximately 50 children. Many of the staff has been employed with the school for over 15 years. As lead teacher, I have had the pleasure of mentoring all of our teaching staff. We work together to plan the year, share the workload, and frequently take time to enjoy each other's company while planning. Our close relationship and united vision for the classrooms provides consistency between the two classrooms, and throughout the day. The four lead teachers received their training at different intuitions and see this as an asset. The staff is small enough to brainstorm about children, and make the well-being of all a team effort. The atmosphere is open and accepting of new ideas.

When Mary was asked what makes the school so successful she responded the communication between the families and teachers. All classes send out weekly emails explaining some the events and lessons in class so parents can ask pointed questions to the child. As we all know the common response to what did you do today? is nothing. This way, the parents can phrase the question differently. I understand you are talking about planets. Tell what you learned.

Mary has worked hard to keep her goal of flexibility with parents. There are many different schedules for children and staff. The close personal service parents receive helps them to feel secure and safe. Parents learn early on that the staff sees the teacher / parent relationship as a team, to advocate for the child. The staff treats the children as they would their own. When asked, the staff members state that Ferndale Montessori is an easy place to work because both the children and adults are respected.

Weather Sensory Water Bottles

This contribution from Heidi Gauger offers the children an opportunity to 'hold' weather in their hands. The accompanying songs and poems allows them to hold it in their hearts.

Basket containing 6 bottles and appropriate labels:

- 1) Sunny - 1 large sparkling yellow pom-pom, lightly colored blue water
- 2) Rainy - 2 large blue pom-poms, blue glitter
- 3) Cloudy - 2 large white pom-poms
- 4) Foggy - 2 pale grey or blue pom-poms
- 5) Snowy - 1 large white pom-pom, snowflake glitter
- 6) Windy - fall leaf glitter

The basket should be located on the shelf near the calendar and can be included in the discussion of the date. After observing outdoors, the type of weather for the day is identified and labeled. The bottles can be passed around the circle and a song or poem can accompany the experience. The second activity includes pictures of the types of weather with duplicate labels.



Direct Aim: The activity gives a concrete way of discussing the weather. Open discussion and observation of weather.

Indirect Aim: The activity provides discussion of changing weather and weather associated with seasons.

Added bonus: As with all Sensory bottles, this is a good focusing and calming activity for the child that is drawn to it.

Songs or Poems to Accompany Weather Sensory Bottles

Sunny

Song - One Sun (Raffi)

Sunny Days by Jill Eisnaugle

There is a joy that comes to light
When sunny days appear
A sense of warmth, both bold and bright
Each time the skies are clear
A moment's peace, a sacred calm
And stillness, all day through
We can behold within our palm
When sunshine is in view.

Rainy

Song - Itsy Bitsy Spider

April Rain Song by Langston Hughes

Let the rain kiss you
Let the rain beat upon your head with silver liquid drops
Let the rain sing you a lullaby
The rain makes still pools on the sidewalk
The rain makes running pools in the gutter
The rain plays a little sleep song on our roof at night
And I love the rain.



Cloudy

Song - Cloudy

Tune: "Bingo"

Today the clouds are in the sky
And cloudy is the weather.

CLOUDY

CLOUDY

CLOUDY

And cloudy is the weather.

The Cloud by Percy Bysshe Shelley

I bring fresh showers for the thirsting flowers,

From the seas and the streams;
I bear light shade for the leaves when laid
In their noonday dreams.

From my wings are shaken the dews that waken

The sweet buds every one,
When rocked to rest on their mother's breast,

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Sensory, continued

As she dances about the sun.
I wield the flail of the lashing hail,
And whiten the green plains under,
And then again I dissolve it in rain,
And laugh as I pass in thunder.

Foggy

The Fog
I like the fog
It's soft and cool,
It hides everything
On the way to school.
I can't see a house
I can't see a tree,
Because the fog
Is playing with me.
The sun comes out
The fog goes away,
But it shall be back
Another day.
Fog by Carl Sandburg
The fog comes
on little cat feet.

It sits looking
over harbor and city
on silent haunches
and then moves on.

Snowy

Song - Snowflake Dance
Tune: Are you Sleeping")

Dance like snowflakes, Dance like snowflakes
In the air, In the air
Whirling, Twirling snowflakes, Whirling,
Twirling snowflakes

Here and there, Here and there.
Snow Song by Sara Teasdale
Fairy snow, fairy snow,
Blowing, blowing everywhere,
Would that I
Too, could fly
Lightly, lightly through the air.
Windy
Song - Wind, Wind
Tune: Row, Row, Row Your Boat"
Wind, wind, blow the clouds
Fast across the sky.
Blow the branches back and forth
In the trees so high.

Lines Composed in a Wood on a Windy Day *by Anne Bronte*

My soul is awakened, my spirit is soaring
And carried aloft on the wings of the breeze;
For above and around me the wild wind is
roaring,
Arousing to rapture the earth and the seas.



It's Apple Picking Time

Fall in Michigan! What a wonderful time of year in our beautiful state! Cider mills and apple orchards rate high on the list of field trips for many schools and our area boasts of many that are "ripe for the picking." Here's a list of a few orchards in the metro Detroit area. Whether you take your class or just your family, it's a fall event that shouldn't be missed.

Oakland

Erwin's Apple Orchard - 248-437-0150 -
erwinorchards.com - 61475 Silver Lake Rd.
South Lyon, MI 48178 (\$8.50 includes
pumpkins)

This field trip begins with a wagon ride out to the orchard. Each child is given a small (¼ peck) plastic bag to fill with apples (holds 7 – 10 apples). A pumpkin patch adjacent to the orchard is an option for the children to pick a pie sized pumpkin of their own. (We take laundry baskets to hold the children's pumpkins for the ride back to the cider mill). A cup of cider and a doughnut are also included. There are several other options (Spooky Barn, Corn Maze) also. A lunch tent is available for the children to enjoy lunch before or after they play on the bales of hay or visit the petting farm. A store with other treats is on site.

Wayne

Plymouth Orchard (734) 455-2290 -
plymouthorchards.com - 10685 Warren Road,
Plymouth, MI 48170 (\$4.50 + \$2.50 for pumpkin)

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Apples, continued

This field trip begins with a short talk on bees, trees and apples. This orchard is moving towards being totally organic, so a discussion on that is also included. A wagon ride around the orchard is next. The children receive one apple, a doughnut and a glass of cider. They have a hay bale maze and a farm animal petting area. The children may also pick a pie sized pumpkin of their choice. An eating area is available. A store with jams, jellies and other treats is on site.

Apple Charlie's - (734) 753-9380 – applecharlie.com- 38035 S Huron Rd, New Boston, MI 48164 (\$6.00 + \$1. For hayride + \$1 for pumpkin)

I was unable to locate applecharlie.com website, but there is a Facebook presence. This field trip includes a walking tour that includes the orchard where the children pick one apple, a visit to the cider mill and the apple packing area. A short introduction to fruit growing, including the importance of bees and an opportunity to view the hive is also included. The basic trip can be augmented with a hay ride and a pie sized pumpkin.

Macomb

Blake's Orchard - 586-784-5343 or 586- 784-9710 - blakefarms.com - 17985 Armada Center Road, Armada, MI & 71485 North Ave. Armada, MI (\$8.25 + \$1 for pumpkin)
A train ride or hay ride takes you out to the orchard at Blake's. There you can pick a small bag of apples (5). Upon your return, there is a Funland that includes a storybook barn, corn

maze, straw mountain and petting farm. A glass of cider and doughnut round out this trip.

Miller's Big Red Orchard (586) 752-7888 - millersbigred.com -4900 32 Mile Rd, Washington, MI 48095 (\$8 pumpkin or apples, \$10 for both)

This orchard boasts a corn maze, tractor slide, hayride, straw mountain, petting farm and aquaponics science tour! The children may either pick apples (¼ peck) OR pumpkins OR both! Cider and doughnut is included. There is a courtyard pavilion with picnic tables for lunch.

Stony Creek Orchard and Cider Mill – 586-752-2453 – stonycreekorchard.com - 2961 W. 32 Mile Road, Romeo (\$7 + \$2 for pie pumpkin)

A wagon ride will take the children out to the orchard. This orchard trip includes a ¼ peck bag of apples the children can pick themselves. A cup of cider and a doughnut awaits them after their time in the orchard. There are picnic tables and a hay mountain for the children to enjoy after.

There are many other cider mills in the area, but these orchards allow the children into the orchard to bring home the apples! With bags of apples to enjoy, here are a few of our favorite recipes.

Apple Sauce #1
8-10 apples, cored & quartered
½ cup water
½ cup sugar or brown sugar

¼ tsp. Cinnamon
lemon juice

In saucepan, simmer apples with water, covered, 15-20 minutes.
Stir in sugar until dissolved.
Chill applesauce well.
If desired, add a few drops of lemon juice, bit of butter, or the cinnamon to perk up flavor.

Apple Sauce #2

We found that simply cutting the apples up, putting them in a crock pot and adding cider (no sugar, no spice) produces a nice applesauce. Cook until the apples break down and the consistency is soft and “saucy”.
Always Perfect Crust
4 cups all-purpose flour
1 Tbs. Honey
2 tsp. Salt
1 ¾ cups solid vegetable shortening, not refrigerated
1 Tbs. White or cider vinegar
1 large egg
½ cup water

Mix flour & salt. Add the shortening, mix with fork until flour is crumbly.
In a small bowl, beat water, vinegar, honey and egg.
Combine liquid and flour, stirring with a fork until all ingredients are moistened.
Divide dough into fifths and roll into five round, flattened patties. Wrap each patty in plastic or waxed paper and chill at least one-half hour.
Flour patties and roll crust out on floured board.

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Apples, continued

(This recipe makes five pie crust. Freeze unneeded patties for use later.)

Michigan Apple Pie

½ cup (or less) sugar

2 Tbs. Flour

1 tsp. Cinnamon

6-8 apples, peeled & sliced

1 Tbs. Lemon juice

2 Tbs. Butter

Slice apples and set aside.

Mix sugar, flour and cinnamon.

Spread ½ of this mixture over the pie crust.

Add apples and sprinkle the remainder of the mixture over the apples. Sprinkle with lemon juice and dot with butter.

Prepare upper crust. Lightly brush upper crust with milk, then sprinkle sugar on crust.

Bake at 425 degrees Fahrenheit for 30-40 minutes.

Apple Quantity Equivalents

4 medium size apples is a pound.

6-8 apples makes a 9-inch pie.

1 bushel makes 16-20 qt. Applesauce.

1 lb. Apples makes 1 ½ c. applesauce.

Nutritional Value

Apples are an excellent low calorie snack (about 85 cal.) They are low fat, low in sodium and fairly high in potassium. Apples are a good source of fiber, which improves digestion. Apples are high in pectin. Pectin seems to have a faculty for limiting cholesterol in the body system.

Michigan Montessori Education Advocacy Network (MMEAN) Update

This update brings welcome news to the Montessori community. Three members of the Michigan Montessori Education Advocacy Network [SF1] (Susie Hyatt, Kay Neff, Sue Fitzpatrick) met with members of the HighScope research staff (Tomoko Wakabayashi, Jill Claxton) with the goal of helping them understand why the PQA (Preschool Quality Assessment) instrument used to assess all preschools under the Great Start Star program was inadequate in assessing Montessori programs.

Over a series of three lengthy meetings beginning this spring, each indicator in the PQA environmental rating scale was reviewed and suggestions were made for changes in the language to better reflect recognition of Montessori quality, or lack thereof, in a Montessori preschool environment. One of these meetings was held at The Montessori Radmoor School in Okemos so that Jill and Tomoko would be able to experience an authentic Montessori classroom in session, the other two were held at the HighScope offices in Ypsilanti. These sessions were quite amicable and both parties were appreciative of the other's skill and assistance. Great strides have been made in helping this assessment tool become more Montessori friendly thanks to the efforts of MMS through MMEAN. HighScope research staff is currently in the process of the first revision of the PQA.

Our next challenge lies in improving State licensing recognition of the value of a

Preschool Montessori Teacher Training Credential. To that end, MMEAN is researching the Early Childhood degree requirements of several state universities in hopes of showing the Montessori training requirements are as rigorous as the university requirements. In addition, three MMEAN members will attend the first Montessori Public Policy Initiative (MPPI) retreat in Washington D.C. this October to meet with Montessori advocates from other states to discuss strategies that have been used to accomplish what we hope to do in Michigan and to share our progress.

These advances have been made in large measure due to the MMS board's actions that began in 2012 as we saw this very serious threat to Montessori schools on the horizon. The MMS board through their ad hoc committee MMEAN is moving in a positive direction to guarantee that all Montessori programs are provided an equal chance to prove their quality within Michigan's Great Start to Quality QRIS system

Annual Report

Financial Information 7/1/2013 - 6/30/2014

Statement of Revenues and Expenses

Total Revenue	\$30,910.80
Total Expenses	\$25,001.71
 Total Change in Net Assets	 +\$5909.09
Fund Balance on July 1, 2013	\$43,264.16
Fund Balance on June 30, 2014	\$49,173.25

Financial Information 7/1/2014 - 6/30/2015

Statement of Revenues and Expenses

Total Revenue	\$36,511.56
Total Expenses	\$34,665.64
Total Change in Net Assets	+\$1845.92
Fund Balance on July 1, 2014	\$49,173.25
Fund Balance on June 30, 2015	\$53,376.17

Statement of Financial Position

Revenue from operations in 2013-2014 and 2014-2015 represents income derived from membership dues, affiliations, advertising, and professional development seminars. In the area of expenses, costs included maintenance of website, seminar/speaker fees and expenses, advocacy and board expenses, and office fees.

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