

President's Corner *by Heidi Gauger*

When Dr. Maria Montessori nominated Dr. J. R. Jervolino for the Nobel Peace Prize she said: "Maria Montessori is universally known for her contribution to the cause of peace and the brotherhood of nations, to which she has dedicated the best years of her long and active life, laying the foundations of a true science of peace by means of an innovated form of education." She knew as Dr. Montessori herself said "Establishing lasting peace is the work of education; all politics can do is keep us out of war." Today may be a turbulent time in our country but as Montessorians we have the opportunity to create environments which guide children to peaceful resolution of disagreements, personal peace and prepare them for peaceful future. We model personal trustworthiness and responsibility to community. We offer opportunity for meaningful and valuable work. Our political views may differ but we all look to the children as our hope. We can remain steadfast in our dedication to children and society, knowing we can make a positive contribution. How lucky we are to be able to touch the future and do our part to make it better!

It is also an interesting time for Montessori in Michigan. Please take time to read our advocacy article. If you are interested in helping or have question let us know. The board and MMEAN committee are hard at work to give Montessori a voice in Michigan.

I look forward to seeing all of you on April 29th at HFCC to hear Paul Epstein speak. As co-author of **The Montessori Way**, author of **An Observer's Notebook: Learning from Children with the Observation C.O.R.E.**, administrator, teacher, researcher, and consultant. He has dynamic things to share about Montessori. It will be a lovely way to spend a spring Saturday!



MMS
Spring
Conference
Save the Date
Saturday, April
29, 2017

Michigan Montessori Board of Directors 2016-17

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MMEAN Update

Michigan Montessori Education Advocacy Network is working for YOU!

MMEAN's Mission Statement:
"We advocate for the validation and advancement of authentic Montessori education in Michigan."

This group of passionate volunteers has been busy working on behalf of all of you in the greater Michigan Montessori community to ensure that Montessori programs are included in and protected by any legislation and regulation that will impact them.

HighScope PQA revision draft: No changes have taken place since the last report. See MMS Fall Newsletter for current status.

Updates on work with Licensing and Montessori Teacher Credential recognition: Currently, we are awaiting a decision from Licensing regarding the status of a Montessori credential. Licensing director Mark Jansen said that he would get back to us at the beginning of this year. We proposed changes in the licensing language that would recognize a Montessori teaching credential as equivalent to an associate's degree, and if a teacher already has a BA in another field PLUS a Montessori credential we are hoping this would be seen as equivalent to an early childhood degree. See MMS Fall Newsletter for additional information on this issue.

Possible lobbyist: We have not hired a lobbyist at this point, although one has been contacted and is ready to work on our behalf.

Montessorians presenting in the larger Early Childhood community: Maple Tree Montessori is presenting a workshop targeting non-Montessori Early Childhood professionals to help increase the awareness and raise our profile in the Early Childhood Education community. (See separate article)

"Celebrating Joyce Frugé – My Mentor"

By Shawn Gasiorowski

"What would Joyce do?" I have been saying these words often in the past few weeks. This phrase helps me reflect on my actions and my words before I move or speak. They guide me and help me make better choices in the work I do. I used to ask Joyce directly, "What would you do?" With her passing last month, I now have to ask that question of myself using my memories of our time together to find answers. I am sad that she is not here anymore, but Joyce spent many years with me, guiding and supporting me. Her words and actions are now part of me. It was a gift to have her in my life. She was my Montessori mentor.



Lecturing in 2013



Teacher Training in 1993

Many of you know Joyce through your training or having heard her speak at seminars. Her contribution to Montessori in Michigan (and beyond) is immeasurable. She touched the lives of children, parents, teachers, schools and entire communities. She worked in Michigan's rural Upper Peninsula, urban Detroit and on remote Mackinaw Island spreading the gift of Montessori. She was a MMS board member offering her expertise and support to us all in that capacity. Children were not the only recipients of her natural teaching gifts. Joyce was an instructor, evaluator and coordinator at MMTEC, providing guidance and encouragement to hundreds of adult learners.

Joyce passed away on January 7, 2017, almost 110 years to the day of the opening of the first Casa Dei Bambini in Rome. At the opening of the first Casa, Dr. Maria Montessori said...

“(this day) is looked upon as the day of feast for the children. It is on this day that the three Kings arrived before the Child Christ and offered him their gifts. It is celebrated as the Feast of Epiphany (Feast of Light or Feast of Gifts).”

Joyce was indeed a gift...a gift to all of who knew her and to all who will benefit from those she mentored. She was the best example of a mentor, a guide and friend. Among her many gifts was the ability to listen. She listened intently to what was being said to her. She never judged. She would then pause and reflect, finally offering another interpretation,

providing another way to think about the issue. Another of her gifts was her generosity. Joyce was a giver. She gave unselfishly of her time and her knowledge. It seemed that she had time to answer every question, address every concern. Another of Joyce's gifts was her boundless energy. She was a hard worker. Joyce built her own shelves (many years ago!) and prepared diligently before every seminar, every lecture and every lesson. Joyce was a guiding light, a beacon, really, always optimistic and deeply devoted to her faith, family, friends and Montessori. She led many of us toward the goals of authentic Montessori, ultimately sharing Montessori's gift with many, many children through her work inspiring adult learners.



Joyce teaching in 1983

I miss her. On the first Monday of the month, I met with my mentor...and she listened...and she gave....and she worked with me, guiding me and encouraging me to grow and improve my skills. Dealing with this loss is a hardship, but having had her as such a big part of my life is one of my greatest joys.

Value your own memories of Joyce. If you have a mentor, tell him or her thank you. Appreciate the comradery and the friendship. If you are an experienced Montessorian, find someone to mentor. Search for a new “Montessorian” and enjoy a cup of coffee, reflect on the hardships and joys of our work.

I wish the gift of a mentor to all of you. Keep Joyce close to your heart. When you are with parents or colleagues or you moving in the classroom and kneeling to speak to a child... ask yourself “what would Joyce do?” Joy and Peace to all of you.

Dimensions of Discipline presented by **Chick Moorman**

Discipline strategies that work. Take a serious look at discipline. Chick will discuss his latest thoughts on discipline, the 3 R's of effective discipline, expose 9 myths of discipline, differences between punishment and consequences, help you discover how to move up in consciousness before you move in with action. Help you find out how to build a cornerstone for your disciplinary master plan. You will become clearly aware of the importance of HOW you choose to do WHAT you choose to do to the people you love the most. Impact your family with a consistent, caring style of discipline that holds children accountable for their actions without wounding their spirit. SPACE IS LIMITED.

Registration is on a first come, first served basis.

Montessori Children's Academy

43521 Romeo Plank Rd.

Clinton Township 48038

Phone: 586-286-4566

Sat Feb. 25, 9-1

\$20/person, \$30/couple

THIS SESSION IS FULL!

Maple Tree Montessori

2944 S. Old Hwy 23

Brighton, 48114

Phone: (810)225-8321

Sat. March 4, 1pm – 4-pm

\$20/person, \$30/couple

SPACE STILL AVAILABLE!

MMS Spring Seminar – **Observation Literacy** presented by Paul Epstein

We know that the Montessori method is observation. So, what would we see happening on our classrooms and schools if we became fluent in our practices of observation? What is observation literacy?

Answers to these and other questions are explored during this hands-on workshop. We will observe classroom video and develop a literacy using the observation C.O.R.E. process. Please bring your curiosities, paper, pens, or pencils!

When we practice observational literacy, observation becomes much more than recordkeeping; it becomes a way of life. Together we can discuss our interests and develop questions with which to connect. In pursuit of our connecting questions, we can use one or more recording methods and obtain information. We then reflect on the information we have obtained and create understanding. Based on our new understandings, we may ask further questions, obtain more information, or enable children's learning and development by implementing new practices, environments, and materials. As we use these elements, we hold on-going conversations in our schools about observation. When we openly ask and share our questions, we develop an observational literacy and a culture of practice. We can discuss our connecting questions, talk about when and how we will obtain information, work together to better understand our observations, and then use our new understandings to enable children to grow and learn. As we discuss our lives with children, we can share how we prepare ourselves to observe.

Without observation, we tend to concentrate on giving presentations well. We will insist children use the materials properly. We will expect that children respond to the materials with concentration. If they do not, we tend to evaluate the child more and the materials and our traditions less. Instead, what if we observe and work together as colleagues to better understand what we have seen? What if we use our new understandings to better guide each child and ourselves?

Observation becomes a dynamic and welcomed experience when we learn from children and when we work together and discuss our observational practices and findings. Observational conversations will also assist us to further prepare ourselves as effective spiritual guides. After all, when we observe, we do not only learn about those we watch. The observed teach the observer. As Montessori personally experienced, the children also become our teachers.

Dr. Paul Epstein

Dr. Paul Epstein works in education as an administrator, teacher, researcher, consultant, speaker, and author.

Paul is excited about transformative, learning experiences. He is grateful that his work offers tremendous opportunities to observe children and adults as they learn. These experiences provide him with both inspiration and data to share, engage and help teachers and parents. Paul's goal is to help them bring about transformative learning in their environments.

Paul's administrative experiences include working as a head of schools, executive director of a school consulting agency, director of teacher education programs, and coordinator of a public school magnet program. As a teacher educator, Paul has directed Montessori teacher education programs for both early childhood and secondary programs. He has been a Montessori classroom teacher in Montessori early childhood, middle, and high school programs. He holds Montessori teacher certification in early childhood and secondary levels one and two from the American Montessori Society. In addition, Paul was an associate professor at Transylvania University and an adjunct professor at Northwestern University.

His work as a speaker and educational consultant has taken him to conferences and schools throughout the United States and also to Canada, Great Britain, Sweden, Mexico, Russia, Brazil, Czech Republic, Japan, Swaziland, Slovakia, Indonesia, China, Australia, Hong Kong, Nepal, South Africa, and Poland.

Paul completed his B.A. at Dartmouth College and his M.A. and Ph.D. in Cultural Anthropology at S.U.N.Y. Buffalo. Paul has published numerous articles in Montessori and other journals. His most recent publication is *An Observer's Notebook: Learning from Children with the Observation C.O.R.E.* He is also the co-author of *The Montessori Way*, a definitive work on the Montessori experience.

Please visit his website at www.paulepstein.us Contact Paul via email at paul@paulepstein



Focus on Schools: Maple Tree Montessori Academy

**by Sue Cherry
Director and Owner**



Founded in 2003, Maple Tree Montessori Academy is proud and honored to closely follow the vision and the philosophy of Dr. Maria Montessori. Our classrooms are prepared with the complete array of Montessori materials. Our entire staff is well trained in Montessori Philosophy and its practical application. We insist on a five day a week schedule and we offer Full Day or Half Day Primary Class sessions which are 3 hours long to facilitate a complete cycle of activity. This allows a child to develop peacefully to their fullest potential, very much as Dr. Montessori observed and documented nearly 100 years ago.

In addition to our 3 – 6 year old Primary Classes, Maple Tree Montessori Academy offers Livingston County parents a choice of a Montessori Elementary Education. Maple Tree Montessori currently enrolls students through the 7th grade and we are the only Private School in Livingston County that offers an Elementary Program that is not parochial or religiously affiliated. We are a registered Private School with the Michigan Department of Education and we provide a rich, diverse, stimulating and nurturing community.

Many parents are considering a quality private school experience for their children...consider this; books, articles and studies have been recently published which compare the outcomes of middle school children very similar in many respects except for one, Montessori education vs. Traditional education. Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi and Kevin Rathunde, University of Utah in 2003*, focused on these two groups and reached the following conclusions:

1. Montessori educated children were much more likely to show high levels of intrinsic motivation.
2. Montessori educated children were much more likely to engage in periods of deep concentration.
3. Montessori children were much more likely to identify their teachers as supportive, fair and interested in them as people.
4. Montessori children were much more likely to identify their classmates as friends.

Montessori children were generally expected to be academically more advanced, but the social and intangible outcomes were both unexpected and important. The research showed that Montessori adolescents have a deep and satisfying community life that increases as they get older. They feel that they are learning with friends. The students reported a stronger sense of psychological and emotional safety, they felt safe from the emotional pain associated with putdowns from teachers and other students and they were much more positive about the quality of their school community.

In a discussion of “flow” and “style of engagement”, the relevance to lifelong learning becomes apparent. The Montessori children, because of their greater interest level; higher intrinsic motivation and strong investment in their work were able to show greater persistence when faced with challenges and a stronger feeling of pleasure and enjoyment of task solution. Montessori children had a strong sense of being actively involved in learning and enjoying learning. Further it can be speculated, that Montessori adolescents will look forward to their careers and social interactions as a part of their service to society and the world.

We at Maple Tree Montessori Academy are proud to be a continuing part of Dr. Maria Montessori’s legacy to the children of the world. We invite you to visit, we invite your questions, and we invite your research into her work and ours.

*Rathunde, Kevin (2003): A Comparison of Montessori and Traditional Middle Schools: Motivation, Quality of Experience, and Social Context; NAMTA Journal, volume 28, number 3.

Exploring Montessori Mini-Conference at Maple Tree Montessori in Brighton

Join us in exploring the Montessori Philosophy! Discover how it compares to other early childhood philosophies while achieving a similar goal of positive early childhood outcomes!

Event Schedule

Registration & Continental Breakfast: 9:00 AM – 9:30 AM

General Opening: 9:30 AM – 11:30 AM

Healing Humankind with Julie Harrison

Julie Harrison, an excellent Montessori teacher for over 20 years, is an experienced Diversity Trainer as well as Montessori Teacher educator. She took her Montessori Primary training from Michigan Montessori Teacher Education Center and her Elementary Training from the Center for Guided Montessori Studies.

In this interactive presentation, Julie will help you to determine the diversity needs of your classroom and school. She will also help you to create a welcoming environment that acknowledges the differences and similarities of all families.

Inspired by Dr. Montessori who believed that peace could only be achieved through the nurturing of the young child, Julie will share her Healing Humankind Curriculum, designed for children from the ages of 3-6 years of age with additional lessons for children up to age 12. This curriculum addresses the need of the young child to become productive, kind and considerate world citizens.

Lunch and Networking: 11:30 AM – 12:30 PM

Session 1 (Breakout Workshops): 12:30 PM – 1:45 PM

1. Montessori Math: Concrete to Abstract

Presented by Sue Cherry

Sue Cherry, a Montessori Primary teacher for over 30 years and Director of Maple Tree Montessori Academy, will be exploring the multi-level Montessori Math Curriculum. We will be working with the sequencing of lessons, the interrelationships between concurrent works and tips to allow the child to work independently with the materials as they are gently led from concrete to abstract. Montessori Math is designed to nurture the child's "mathematical mind" and encourage a lifelong love and full appreciation of Math.

2. Peace and Education

Presented by Anita Adhikary

Anita B. Adhikary was born in Kathmandu, Nepal. She is a genuine citizen of the world, living in several continents and experiencing multiculturalism firsthand from a young age. Her passion is learning about other cultures, meeting people, and facilitating workshops for parents and teachers on "Parent Education/Montessori at Home and Peace." Ms. Adhikary has published four children's books. Two of these books: Y is for Yoga and My Daughters are Smart! Are available at the United Nations Bookshop! Ms. Adhikary received her early childhood education certification from ADMTEI in 1998. She is a faculty member at the Adrian Dominican Montessori Teachers Education Institute, teaching Peace Education. Today's interactive session will include an intro to Peace Education, how to prepare a Peace Shelf, Peaceful activities and Yoga for children. Participants are advised to dress comfortably and, if possible, bring a Yoga mat or towel.

3. Montessori Language: Sequencing Materials leading to an Explosion of Reading

Presented by Julie Harrison

Join Julie as she presents the Early Childhood Language Curriculum of a Montessori classroom. She will



demonstrate how a hands-on, and carefully Sequenced Montessori Language Curriculum lead the young child to an explosion of reading and writing and prepare the child for grammar and cultural studies.

Break: 1:45 PM – 2:00 PM

Session 2 (Breakout Workshops): 2:00 PM – 3:15 PM

4. Montessori Math

(Repeat of Workshop 1)

5. Peace and Education

(Repeat of Workshop 2)

6. Montessori Language

(Repeat of Workshop 3)

Tour of the Montessori Academy and Question/Answer Time: 3:15 PM – 4:15 PM

Registration is limited. Register EARLY. One person per form. DEADLINE: February 28, 2017 COST: \$55.00

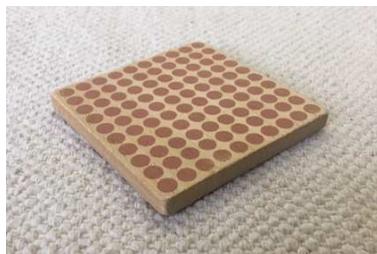
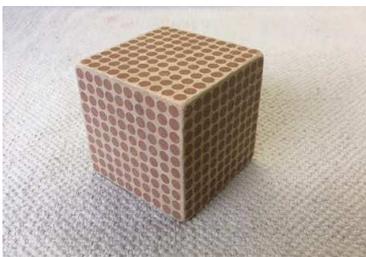
(Includes continental breakfast and lunch)

Request a [Exploring Montessori Brochure](#) or register online.

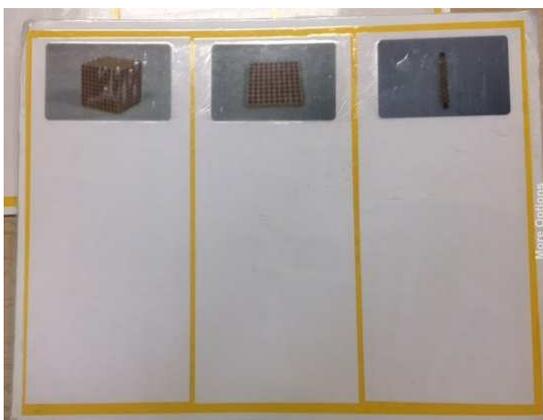
Exchanging Game – A Math Game for Your Classroom

We have had several positive comments about including suggestions for classroom materials in this newsletter. If you have any materials you've developed that you think your colleagues would appreciate, please send a description and photos of the work you've created. Here, we are including a "two person game" we made several years ago to reinforce exchanging. The Exchanging Game was developed by Debra Gorman Cagle at ADMTEI .

The game includes two boards with pictures of a 1000 cube, a 100 square and a ten bar across the top with long columns below, two 1000 cubes, 19 100 squares, 19 ten bars and a die with numerals 1-6. The object of the game is to get a 1000 cube. The children take turns rolling the die and take the quantity of ten bars and place them on their boards. When more than 10 ten bars are on the board, they exchange for a 100 square. The rolling and exchanging continues until one is able to exchange 10 hundred squares for a 1000 cube. In demonstrating the game, we count "1 ten, 2 tens, 3 tens, etc." but when we exchange, we say, " 10, 20, 30, etc."



The board



The complete game



Using Positive Verbal Guidance (Responsive Language)

Children often forget what constitutes appropriate behavior from one day to the next and from one situation to another (Kostelnik, Soderman, & Whiren, 1999). They need frequent reminders of the rules; if corrective action is necessary, adults should be clear but non-accusatory.

Responsive language utilizes positive verbal guidance that is respectful towards children, labels and validates children's feelings, and clarifies rules and responsibilities. Responsive language gives reasons and explanations to children (Stone, 1993). Adults actively listen to children and respond in a sensitive manner.

State rules in positive terms.

Tell children what to do instead of what not to do. Try to eliminate "stop," "don't" and "no" from your statements to children (except to keep a child safe in an emergency).

"Please walk" rather than "Don't run."

"Eat your food" rather than "Don't play with your food."

"Sit down flat so other children can see" instead of "Don't stand up."

Make requests and give directions in respectful ways.

"When you are finished eating, please throw your napkin and cup in the trash can."

Validate children's feelings.

"I know that it is hard to wait for a turn. But other children want a turn too."

Clarify classroom rules and give reasons for the limits.

"Walk to the bus so that you stay safe and don't fall." "Use a quiet voice in the hall so you don't disturb the other classes."

Model the Behavior You Want a Child to Follow

All young children benefit from a visual model of what to do, but this is especially important for children with developmental or language delays. Couple the **modeling** or demonstration of proper procedure, with direct explanation—otherwise children may not imitate the desired behavior themselves at a later time.

- Show the child exactly what you want while giving verbal directives.
- "Put your backpack under your seat like this."
- "After you dry your hands, throw away the paper towel right here."
- Verbal descriptions of desired behaviors are especially needed when the adult wants to model resisting temptation or delaying gratification.
- "It's really hard for me to wait for a turn on the swing. I want to run up there right now, but I will wait until Sarah is done."

Reinforce Appropriate Behavior

The most effective method of managing children's behavior is through the application of positive reinforcement. When teaching a new behavior, it is best to reinforce every time the behavior occurs. New behaviors require immediate and continuous reinforcement to be learned and maintained. For more complicated behavior, it is important to reinforce small steps. For example, to reinforce a child who is cleaning up the block area, which to her appears to have about a million blocks spread all over the floor, ask the child to put five blocks on the shelf, and then praise her. Don't wait until the entire job is completed.

- Behaviors that are followed by positive reinforcement are likely to be strengthened and repeated.
- Use **social reinforcers** (smiles, praise, pat on the back, wink, OK sign) and **activity reinforcers** (engaging in a special activity as a reward for desired behavior). **Tangible reinforcers** (stickers, stars, prizes) should be used only for short periods of time when other types of reinforcement fail to work with a particular child.
- Use **effective praise**: praise that is selective, specific, and positive.

Effective praise (called "encouragement" by Hitz & Driscoll, 1988) is more likely to provide meaningful feedback and foster healthy self-esteem. Ineffective praise may actually lower children's self-confidence, inhibit achievement, and make children depend on external praise (Katz, 1993; Kohn, 1993; Kohn, 2001). (See figure below)

Comparison of Ineffective and Effective Praise

Ineffective Praise

Is given indiscriminately and tends to be discounted by children—every child is given a "good job" star at the end of the day regardless of her behavior that day

Is general—overuse of pat phrases, often delivered mechanically

"Good job."

"Great."

"You're such a nice boy, Joshua."

Makes negative comparisons or encourages competition between children

"Tommy, you are the best runner!"

"You are the best helper in the class."

Uses evaluative words like "good" or "beautiful" or focuses on the end product

"What a beautiful picture."

"You are a good reader."

Relies on external rewards or approval of teacher

"You took turns with the tricycle today. Here is a sticker."

"I like the way you worked together."

Effective Praise (Encouragement)

Is selective—directed to an individual child or small group contingent upon performance of desirable behavior

Is descriptive and specific—provides explicit feedback about the behavior being encouraged or the rule reinforced and delivered with a natural but enthusiastic tone of voice

"You put all the lids on the markers. Now they won't dry out."

"Kaniesha, you remembered to raise your hand before talking. That way two people weren't talking at the same time and I could hear what you had to say."

"Joshua, I noticed that you shared the trucks with Troy today."

Avoids comparisons or competition; compares children's progress with their past performance rather than other children

"Tommy, you run so fast now."

"You helped Max clean up all the puzzles."

Focuses on improvement of process rather than evaluation of a finished product

"You painted a long time using lots of blue paint."

"You are learning to read lots of words!"

Links children's behavior to their own enjoyment and satisfaction or to the effect on another person

"You took turns with the tricycle today.

You and Sammy had lots of fun playing together."

"You must feel proud of how you worked together."

"Look at Cindy's face. She looks happy that you shared some play dough."