



ELEMENTARY NEWSLETTER

Maria Montessori Children's School Foundation, Inc.
Madrid Street, Merville Park Parañaque City

JULY 2006

GREGORIO DEL PILAR CLASS Flor Manalo

Our School...Our Second Home

This school year 2006 - 2007, Gregorio del Pilar welcomes the new members of the class. We would like to officially greet them "WELCOME TO MONTESSORI!"

We saw the same scenario last year, old friends exchanging their stories with enthusiasm about their long summer vacation. New ones are still shy the first few weeks but eventually blended in and made new friends. Looking at them, I realized that they are the picture of a beautiful tapestry - diverse in almost everything yet they compliment and make a beautiful whole.

Our new classroom is a haven for all of us...much bigger than the old Gregorio del Pilar classroom, much cooler because of the numerous windows and seldom use of fluorescent light (we use natural light coming from the windows). And of course, two comfort rooms, which are very much appreciated.

The first week was marked by the First Great Lesson.

"Touring" them around the school premises - where they are off limits and areas where they can stay after class, where to pass through to go to the covered court (through our former classroom) - gave the new ones a chance to orient themselves in their new environment.

It is a joy to see the older

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

JULY
29 Family Day/
General Assembly

AUGUST
18 Casa Parent
Education Seminar
Sensitive Periods

31 Montessori Day

SEPTEMBER
6 Parenting Seminar
with Dr. Yoyit Roldan
17 Sportsfest
21 Parent Seminar
on Transitioning



MMCS FAMILY DAY 2006

Saturday, July 29, 2006 • 8:00AM to 2:00PM

"SAMPUNG DEKADA NG MONTESSORI"

It's time for Family Day once again! In line with our celebration of 100 years of MONTESSORI EDUCATION in February 2007, our theme for the year is "SAMPUNG DEKADA NG MONTESSORI." The day will have an Italian flavor to it, in acknowledgement of Dr. Montessori's heritage.

Registration is from 8:00 to 8:30. Be prepared to enjoy yourselves, have lots to eat and drink and, of course, have FUN!

children take care of the younger ones...sharing what they already know and what general rules apply in the classroom.

Towards the last week of June, the election of officers was conducted. Children were able to choose from among their classmates whom they think are responsible enough to carry out the jobs of "maintaining peace and order" in the classroom.

The dissection of the fish brought about the collection of "dead and alive" specimens. Bugs like the brown beetle, cicada, grasshopper and moth were brought to class for studying, observation and even writing purposes. Artistic works came out; the children saw who among them are "good drawers."

After studying the "specimens," the beetle and grasshopper were set free in the garden. The dissected fish ended up as a meal shared during lunch time, while the internal organs were scrutinized by the children with fascination on their faces.

Some afternoons, looking at work or at play, I see the children happy and carefree; confident and trusting like when they are at home. That is why we must make this place their second home, a place not only for nurturing their intellect but where every aspect of their being is respected and cared for as well.

"Thank you to Marco and Andrew for the milkfish used for dissection. Thank you, Teacher Grace for the set up of materials in the classroom. Thank you, Mrs. Roda Marcelo for being our

parent representative again this year.

To all Gregorio del Pilar parents—Thank you and God bless us all!



"We shall walk together on this path of life, for all things are part of the universe, and are connected with each other to form one whole unity."

—Maria Montessori

JOSE RIZAL CLASS Sana Baltazar

By Lia Lopez
Teacher Assistant

Two years ago, I wanted a job near my house because my first job was in Greenhills, San Juan and the ride to work was tough. With this in mind, I decided to give my resumes to the different schools in the Merville area. MMCSFI was the first school to respond. After a series of interviews, and the warm reception I received from the school personnel, I decided, this was the school for me.

I came to Montessori with very few ideas about how their teaching method goes. During my first few weeks, I was very surprised to see the children doing different works inside the classroom - at their ease at talking to adults and their being

independent, confident, and so responsible. I was amazed!

Then my training started. Slowly, as I started to observe what was going on inside a Montessori classroom, I began to understand why.

Aside from gaining knowledge from the different presentations given to the children, I learned how to interact better with the children. Instead of spoon-feeding the child, they are let to discover things on their own. They learn better this way, remember and understand what they are exposed to, and at the same time, enjoy themselves. I talk to the children as my peers and not as someone subordinate to me. I listen to their discoveries, their ideas, and their opinions instead of just being the one they listen to.

A couple of months back, I said good bye to the children. It was one of the hardest things I had to do. I had grown to love this school and the children. As I started looking into other teaching jobs, I was faced with the prospect of preparing lesson plans, being confined to a specific seating arrangement, hour-long lectures, computing for numerical grades, and facing passive students - a Montessori teacher's nightmare!

I realized that this is not how learning should be. I realized that if I were to continue teaching, what better way to do it than by doing it through the method that you believe in. For these, I came back to Montessori.

EMILIO JACINTO CLASS

Jon Valerio

Hi to all parents of Emilio Jacinto Class! First of all I would like to thank you for coming to the class orientation. I would also like to thank Mrs. Gloria and Mrs. Nakpil for taking the responsibility of being class parent representatives. They have already lined up several activities for the class this early. I wish I could match the energy of these moms. Thanks to all of you for signing up on the parent volunteer sheet. Your suggestions and help are highly appreciated.

I would like to welcome (applause and drumrolls please!) the new members of the E. Jacinto family namely: Samantha Green, Frankie Ylanan, Bettina Nakpil, Julianne Masil, Arianne Harn, Paulette Estampador, Sandro Ramos, Miguel Sarmiento, Noah Tañada, Alen Panaligan, Rendell Uy and Javy Tongco. Lose some, win some more.

I would like to share with everyone this poem (?). I hope you'll like it. It took my brain cells weeks to finish this.

"GTC:God-Teacher Conference."

GOD: *What brings you here my child, Is there something troubling your mind?*

TEACHER: *Yes my Lord, I've come to seek some advice.*

GOD: *It's about time. You've lost fire in your eyes.*

*I'll listen to you one sigh at a time.
My Son's the Greatest Teacher Of*

all Time.

I'll refill your tank and give you spunk.

You need more than just a pat on the back.

Ask Me for help when you're up to your neck. I'm the Almighty, what the heck!

TEACHER: *As I go to work every single day*

And give presentations the Montessori way

Grant me strength and patience, Lord

As long as THE BLACK STRIP if You can afford.

TEACHER: *When acting ODD are some of my children*

Remind me Lord, "My child, they're all EVEN!"

GOD: *Love them GREATER THAN, not one LESS THAN*

In a Montessori teacher's eyes they're all EQUAL TO

Same as I've treated all of you.

TEACHER: *Lord, how is it supposed to be?*

When two eyes aren't enough to see

That my students run CIRCLES around me

And hop from TABLE A, B and C.

GOD: *If it's fine with you I'll grant you a third, at the back of your head!*

TEACHER: *How about the times I'm running out of breath*

Or feel like shaving off my hair?

GOD: *Be calm, you're far from death*

Look in the mirror and save your hair

Just get started with WORK Of AIR.

If there's much going on & seems you can't hang on teach them

kids PARTS OF A POLYGON

If you think you're barely alive

Relax, Renaissance Man, teach DIVISIBILITY BY 5.

Drink your vitamins, there's much to do

A Montessori teacher must possess the POWER OF 2.

TEACHER: *I've seen sun shiny days*

Where children refuse to make hay

I'm glad the TETRACHORD isn't nylon

I would've done a Judas at high noon.

They give new meaning to STRIKING, MOVEMENT and PLAYING UP AND DOWN.

Such are days when I need not ask,

"For whom the Montessori BELLS toll?"

I can read very well the writings on the wall.

GOD: *Keep those frustrations in SINGULAR, Your smiles in PLURAL*

ADD on to your understanding

SUBTRACT to your tensions

MULTIPLY your humor and wisdom

DIVIDE your apprehensions.

Be like Solomon, heed these advice:

"Never grow tired of your children's why's,

Representing the materials is a simple exercise."

Don't be uptight, stick to the fight

Nobody makes Einsteins overnight

Come to school feeling light

PLANTS are like children,

They GROW TOWARDS THE LIGHT.

Just look up, I'm watching over you

*All these words I hand down to you
Hoping you'll continue that magic you do.*

And since I can't go down and do it for you

I've sent the Mammolina for all of you.

APOLINARIO MABINI CLASS
Flor Lacierda

It's been two months since the start of the school year. This year is hardly any different from the many other years since I first started in Montessori, except that I see a lot of challenges in the bud. Already, these challenges are trying to get in the way and are vying for everyone's attention. Some are draining and make you stop and think whether you are indeed heading in the right direction. There has been no other time in my life as a teacher when I just sit down at the end of the day to spend time to assess current turn of events except now.

Having been working here for more than two decades, this institution has been so much a part of my life. I cannot even figure out what life is after retirement. Just the thought of not being with children anymore brings inexplicable sadness. The time will surely come when I hear students' laughter no more and I know deep in my heart that it is inevitable. This thought, my dear parents, is sustaining me in my times of

professional bankruptcy; times when I think I need to recharge spiritually to be able to rise above all sorts of crisis that may come and those that are currently in view. The thought of not being here anymore someday reminds me to give my best regardless of circumstances, knowing that at the end of my sojourn I will be asked to give an account of everything I do.

Setting a goal to make this institution a beautiful place for children is not a solitary effort. Doing it alone is almost an exercise in futility. Nonetheless, does standing up alone matter if it means making a difference? We all have the answer. I enjoin you, my dear parents, colleagues and the administration to do your part. Your share, no matter how little, counts.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all my parents, especially those who came for the first meeting with the parent representative. Special thanks to Mr. & Mrs. Jojo Aquino for responding to our call to have a fish aquarium in class, to Mr. & Mrs. Miguel Alcazaren for lending some VHS tapes related to lessons in biology and to Mrs. Michelle Buñag for accepting without reservations my request to have her as the parent representative this year. Lest I forget, I would also like to thank Mr. Wayne Enage and Mrs. Eileen Gonzalez, our parent representatives last year, for a job well done. Thank you very much. May your tribe increase.



**100 YEARS OF
MONTESSORI**

2007 Centenary Celebration

In just a matter of months, Montessori from around the world will have the rare opportunity to participate in a once-in-a-lifetime celebration:

Champion the cause of all children by supporting the Montessori Centenary.

Visit

www.montessoricentenary.org

Sign

The Montessori Centenary Declaration.



Montessori's life work began with a group of slum children in 1907 when she opened her famous *Casa Dei Bambini*. Through her observations of and work with the children, she discovered their remarkable, almost effortless, ability to absorb knowledge from their surroundings. *Children teach themselves!* This simple and profound truth inspired Montessori's lifelong pursuit of educational reform, curriculum development, methodology, psychology, teaching and teacher training - all based on her dedication to further the self processing of the child.

PAGKAMASINOP CLASS Chi Feleo

For this school year 2006 - 2007, Mrs. Dadis and I will be working with 32 children. Last June 5 we welcomed most especially the first timers: David Baldivia, Hikaru Kobayashi, Adrian Puno, Kim Flores, Cristina Jimenez, Saby Reyes, Sophie Santiago, Sofia Trinidad, and Bea Venezuela; and the transferees: Gaby Gloria, Seleena Harligo, Adriel Poblete, Mara Samson and Stefanie Stailey to the Pagkamasinop Class. Getting to know each other—old, new and transferees is never a problem with children. Socializing and making friends come naturally for them. This tendency to communicate is very much evident in this class.

The much awaited election of class officers was held last June 16, 2006. It was another memorable event for both the candidates and the voters. Arianna Mercado won by one point against Leandro Banzon in the presidential race. Gaby Hermanos and Sugar Gaisano scored a landslide victory as the vice president and secretary respectively. Dan Salvador was re-elected class treasurer. Cipi Espaldon and Amanda Cruz bagged the P.R.O. for this year. Adriel Poblete and Cristina Jimenez were the new sergeant-at-arms. The newly elected class officers were

applauded by the group and I wished them good luck in fulfilling their duties. The other candidates were likewise thanked for their participation and display of sportsmanship.

It is almost two months since the academic year started and the children are busy doing lots of work in class. To mention a few:

- doing research work as follow up from the great lessons presented (vertebrate/invertebrate animals, theories on the formation of the universe/solar system)
- Project making in science (ecosystem—food chain, web, energy/ food pyramid, symbiotic relationships between organisms)
- Skit presentation and poster making on propaganda techniques.
- Work on experiments in biology, noting down observations and making a report after (plant needs, r e s p i r a t i o n a n d transpiration; stem's xylem and phloem; extraction of chlorophyll from leaves, dissection of fish, examination of fish eggs/scales using a microscope, observing the metamorphosis of a caterpillar, making a terrarium)
- Reading and writing, doing computations and other related activities in carrying out assigned or initiated tasks

- Individual preparation for the showcase portfolio (for the older children)
- Daily journal/reflection writing and conferencing with teacher
- Fund raising activity/ help collect plastic bottles and tin cans. (Children are very enthusiastic about this and even graph their weekly collection to see their progress.)

Aside from the various works going on in class, the children manage to socialize and find time to engage in recreational activities during their break time. They eat, hang around and talk/sing/play, and do other things together.

We have many more months to go and there will definitely be more developments to look forward to in school. I leave that to your child to fill you in as we go through the rest of the school year.

Lastly, I would like to thank the parents who attended the orientation last June 2, 2006, and to the support you are giving the class for this school year. I would like to commend the zealous effort exerted by the class parent representatives Carol Hermanos and Joy Gaisano. Thank you for the donations: fish food (Mr. & Mrs. Javier) and hanging plants (Mr. & Mrs. Trinidad). Thank you

also to Miss Taimy Cruz for inviting a resource speaker (a chef) to give a talk/demonstration to the children on July 26, 2006. Thank you too for the on going support/participation of the parents whose children are graduating this year.

Katapatan Class

Teacher Elyo Dillera

It just seems like yesterday when I first set foot here in Maria Montessori. As I recall, it was June 17, 2003 when the school officially hired me with a promise of excellent training and well-rounded exposure to the true Montessori pedagogy. As I went through the rigorous Montessori training, under the supervision of my trainers Mr. Baltazar, Ms. Obnamia, Mrs. Baltazar, and Mr. Rapirap, I gradually realized the real purpose of Montessori education. More than just an aid to life, it helps the child secure his place in the world without having to step on someone else's foot. In my three years here in Montessori, I can say that I have had a good journey in finding my place in school.

Upon finishing my training, I was assigned to be the Level III Class Directress. For two years, I've handled students that are mostly taller than me and have changes in appearance, voice, interest, and hair style more frequently than the change of seasons. So when the final month of the last Level III batch almost came to an end, I knew that another bend in

the road would come my way. I was already expecting a class assignment in Level 1 but for some unforeseen events, I was assigned in Level 2. I was really hoping to handle upper elementary children because of my experience in Level 3. So here I am in the old Kagalingan classroom handling the new Katapatan class.

I welcome all my 32 students in this new school year! With the old Katapatan students namely Joey, Sandro, Tricia, Caitlin, Una, Micah, Aldo, Angelo, Jasmine, Zach, Isa, and Monica and the students from Kagalingan class namely Jenny, Renzo, Jaysen, Bun, Mika, and Nicole, we welcome the newly phased-in students from Level 1 namely Dan, Billie, Bianca, Gian, Raffy, Japs, Iya, Michael, Jose, Rinalyn, Nikki, Gaston, Nicolo, and Ryan. I pray that we will have a fruitful year ahead of us!

Since we just started the school year, the children decided to have an election. The class decided on whom to nominate for President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer, Security, and PRO. After a week of campaigning, the class voted using ballots and counted the votes afterwards. I would like to congratulate Jenny Arbis - President, Caitlin Co - Vice-President, Bianca Francisco - Secretary, Zach Garcia - Treasurer, Aldo Isabela, Bun Narca - Security, and Patricia Chong and Una Ilarde - PRO.

Now that we are going through our second month, the class has started Biology lessons through the Second Great Lesson of Montessori. As a follow-up activity, we had a planting activity where the students paired up and chose whether to

plant Sunflower, Daisy, or Tomato. The pair will take turns in watering the plant and they will have to see to it that it gets enough sunlight. The directions in the packet said that the seeds will germinate in 12 days but due to the good weather that we had, the seeds started sprouting after four days. The students, once they enter the classroom, automatically get the water spray and water their pots. I was so surprised when someone shouted and entered the classroom with so much glee on his face. I was about to reprimand that child for his uncanny behavior when he blurted out that his seeds already sprouted. True enough, we all went outside to our small balcony space and saw small leaves sprouting out. I knew that it would be unforgettable for them because they took care of their seeds and because of that, a life sprouted out of it. After almost two weeks, we are slowly re-planting their plants to a bigger seedling bag so that it will grow fast.

Addendum:

I would like to thank Mrs. Sarah Ledesma for accepting the parent representative post this school year. I would also like to thank all the parents who have been very active and supportive to the class and have been giving such good suggestions for future class activities. I would also like to thank Mrs. Anne Pugeda for her wonderful ideas on how to decorate the classroom with plants to alleviate the heat (she even brought her gardener to see the place).

I hope to hear more from you now that we also have our own Katapatan@yahoo.com.

MAPAGKUMBABA CLASS Glenn Rapirap

☀ Family Camping – The Illusion & the Reality

by John G. Besa

MMCSFI parent - Father of Louie

Ever had that yen to take your family to go see the great outdoors? Even though neither you nor your significant other has ever had much outdoor experience? Well, throw in a kid (or worse, kids) and you have the stuff that award-winning sitcom episodes are made of.

Naturally, the timing has to be at its worst... Peak season. Holy week, as a matter of fact. Of course, I had an official purpose... As a musician I was to play with the Blue Rats at the usual Holy Week Music Festival at White Beach, Puerto Galera. We were told that as performing artists, we would have accommodations for sure, but only from Good Friday till Easter Sunday. Excited out of our skins, we (Marlette, our daughter Louie and I) eagerly decided to leave a day early and make our own accommodations rather than be housed with the rest of the band by... Ahem... "roughing" it. So we bought a cheap tent at a certain shop in Makati, a couple of impossible-to-fold sleeping mats and cheapo backpacks which we filled to overflowing with clothing, snacks and a couple of bottles of wine... Three weeks early!!!

The trip there was kinda rough on us... Probably because we didn't pack the stuff properly and I had to end up carrying all three bags because Marlette had her hands full with Louie, who was then only five. When we finally got there we found out that camping right on the beach wasn't allowed, so we had to ask one

of the beachfront establishments to allow us to camp on their property for a fee. All were taken (supposedly... I guess the owners were waiting for us to make them an offer they couldn't refuse) except for a beautiful little plot right on the end of the beach with a good view. So pitch tent we did (took me twenty minutes, double the time the store told me it would take because I didn't practice) and hit the beach, feeling extremely proud of ourselves.

And then it rained.

Running back for our little slice of home, we dove in and discovered we'd set camp on a nest of angry red ants. Many ouches later we'd managed to move camp a few feet away to an area surrounded by thorny brambles, less ideal but still seemingly workable. Laughing, we played inside the tent until we noticed large drops of condensation inside it that formed because of all our horsing around. We'd also noticed that the floor was getting wet, which we tried to dismiss as normal til water seemed to well up from about everywhere. Turns out my bargain basement tent's seams were not properly sealed, and soon we were as drenched as the stuff we'd brought with us. Also, a tear in the back of the tent from the brambles we'd parked close to didn't help much, either.

Eventually we'd decided to abandon ship (no pun intended) and to seek shelter in the accommodations that were supposedly made for us, only to be turned away because the rooms were still in use. Picture this: Me holding my daughter in my arms with Marlette carrying whatever could be salvaged from our waterlogged tent (we'd locked whatever we could come back for inside), all of us in plastic raincoats but miserably drenched to the bone.

Eventually one of the attendants of the place whose grounds we'd camped on took pity on us (thank you, Johnny) and let the three of us use his single bed for the night. And there we lay in the dark, getting bitten by mosquitoes while my daughter cried herself to sleep and Marlette trying her best to cheer up moping of me.

Naturally, the story didn't end there, but all's well that ends well. We even tried again a year later, which actually went quite well considering that after the first day Louie made it absolutely clear every hour on the hour that she missed airconditioning and cable TV, and did so less-than-delicately.

So what did all this misery teach us? One, if you plan on camping, NEVER skimp on equipment and practice using it properly – Professional advice from wherever you can find it will be of great help. Two, NEVER underestimate Mother Nature. Three, make sure your adventure is appropriately tailored for the kids... They rarely enjoy doing what you enjoy. Lolling around doing nothing as stressed out adults are wont to do on vacation is usually the worst thing for hyperactive kids. And if *they're* not happy, you definitely won't be.

And finally, splurge a little bit on the last couple of days and spring for air-conditioning and cable with running water -- Your family will sing you praises, at least til you get home. Our last vacation last year was a breeze, in spite of being stranded there by a storm – And so enjoyable that Louie cried when we'd packed to go home. Now we can't wait to do the same with our newborn son... But that will have to wait a year or five.

FIVE ESSENTIAL WAYS TO BUILD YOUR CHILD'S SELF ESTEEM

By Kathryn Kvols

What would you be doing right now if you truly believed in yourself? The destiny of life is greatly determined by our level of self-esteem. If we have a high level of self-esteem, we are more likely to develop and use our many talents. By the same token, if we have low self-esteem, our talents often go undeveloped, and we may become underachievers.

As parents, we want our children to feel good about themselves and feel fulfilled as adults. Here are five things that we can do now than can assure high self-esteem for our children.

1. Celebrate, honor, and nurture your children's uniqueness. Sometimes this can be difficult, especially when our children display qualities of which we are not fond. We tend to encourage the things we agree with and discourage the things we don't like. Since most children want to please us, we must be careful that we do not discourage the true spirit of the child. There are many people who are not happy in their work today because they are doing what they think their parents want them to do rather than what would make them truly happy.
2. Use parenting methods that encourage personal responsibilities rather than answering to an authority figure. Offer children choices and opportunities to express their opinion and leadership. Teach children how to think and not what to think. Autocratic parenting methods such as criticism, control, and nourishment tend to stifle the spirit of the child.
3. Teach your children the value of contributing. Being helpful is often the thing that makes us feel truly valuable. The more your children find their value by being helpful, the more

support your children will receive from society.

4. Teach children to be pro-active. It can be extremely discouraging to feel powerless. One of the best ways to empower children is to explore many solutions to a problem, go through the consequences of each solution, and choose a solution that serves the interest of everyone involved. Children who develop a pattern of being victims in life tend to carry this pattern as adults.
5. Teach your children that what they think and how they feel about themselves is more important than what others think of them. When children start to think that other's opinions are more valuable than theirs, they lose their sense of self. A great toll is taken when children give up who they are in order to be liked by others.

Here are some questions to ask yourself related to building healthy self-esteem.

Do your eyes light up when your children enter the room?

Do you speak well of your children to others?

Are your thoughts of your children loving and pro-active?

Do you allow yourself to learn from your children?

Can your children be different from you and still be loved by you?

Is it safe for your children to express their positive and negative feelings to you?

Do they have siblings that love them, or do their siblings try to "bring them down"?

Do you take genuine interest in what they are doing and thinking?

Do they have responsibilities in the household?

If you have answered yes to these questions, it is likely that your children are well on the road to having healthy self-esteem. If you have answered no to several of these questions, you may want to read further information on parenting, attend a parenting class, or get professional help. Your children's self-esteem is critical to their future success. Investing time in building your child's self-esteem will not only benefit your children but also your community.

► Kathryn Kvols is the author of **Redirecting Children's Behavior** (available through the Montessori Bookshelf at www.montessori.org). She is an international speaker and the President of the International Network for Children and Families.

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