



BLUEBIRD BULLETIN

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IT'S A WINTER WONDERLAND: MIR HOLIDAY SING

The MIR Holiday Sing is taking a traditional turn this year with a theme of *Winter Wonderland*. Holiday Sing will be held Wednesday, December 18 at 7 PM at the University of Redlands Memorial Chapel.

Students of all ages and levels will sing familiar and not-so-familiar holiday songs at this event, one of the biggest and most popular of the year. The show will close with the Toddler classes performing the always-popular grand finale.

Admission to Holiday Sing is free and you are welcome to invite extended family. Seating begins at 6:30 PM and the program

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THE CHILD IN NATURE

by MAURA JOYCE, HEAD OF SCHOOL

“When children are placed in natural surroundings, then there is the revelation of their strength.”—Maria Montessori

As the rains came to Redlands in November, I watched with interest the response and reaction of the children and adults alike. Walking along the sidewalk here at school and in my neighborhood, I was greeted with both, “I love this weather,” and “Ugh, isn’t this terrible?” For me, I always take the opportunity to breathe in the wet air and put on my rubber shoes so that I can boldly walk wherever there are puddles. Growing up in the Northeast, rain and other wet and cold weather was a regular occurrence and I remember my mother stating that old adage, “There is no such thing as bad weather, just wrong clothing.”



Being out in nature is one of the joys of childhood, and we witness that joy daily on this campus. Children run on the grass, dig in the sand and the dirt, collect leaves, and

enjoy the open air. On the elementary playground, children pile sticks and branches and other found objects to create “shelters”. Then they take them apart and start over the next week. They really enjoy getting dirty and interacting with all that they find among the grapefruit trees.

In our part of the world, adults are quick to shut a door or the windows if the air is cold or the rain begins. We often bring the children inside once the elements bring what

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A LITTLE BIRD TOLD ME...PTM NEWS AND NOTES

By JILL SCHOLZ, PTM SECRETARY

PTM LAUNCHING FOOD DRIVE FOR JOSEPH'S STOREHOUSE

It's time again for PTM's annual food drive benefiting Joseph's Storehouse, a food and clothing bank located in Redlands. The drive runs December 2-13.

Drop off any nonperishable food items you wish to donate in your child's classroom or the office in the designated boxes. Parent volunteers and children from Upper Elementary will deliver the items at the conclusion of the food drive. If you are interested in aiding with delivery, please contact your Room Rep.

EVENTS AND CALENDAR

Next PTM Meeting: The next meeting will be held Thursday, January 23, 2014 at 6 PM before the next Parent Education Night. All are welcome and encouraged to attend. Childcare is available for enrolled students by reservation for both meetings.

Party planning: Check out the calendar for your class's upcoming classroom holiday festivities! Seek out your Room Rep for more information.

HOLIDAY GIFT GIVING

Holiday gifts and supplies from Barnes & Noble, Scholastic, and Innisbrook: MIR 6th year students are holding a Barnes & Noble bookfair on Saturday, December 7, 9-4 PM. Buy scrip (gift cards) from the Grove PTG to use at the bookfair and support Grove students as well.

Need more books? We are opening our PTM Scholastic bookfair this week in the foyer of Jean and Maryhelen's room. That bookfair remains open through December 13.

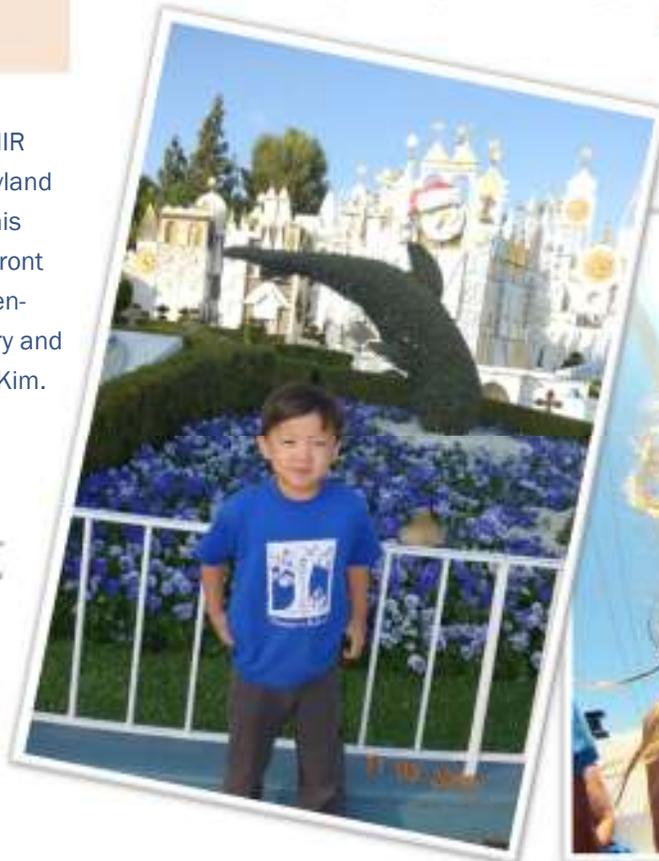
Order wrapping paper for your gifts, plus additional gifts and other supplies, through Innisbrook. You can place orders online at innisbrook.com (use school code 102074).

PARENTING

Need ideas to fight boredom over the break? As the winter break approaches, consider arranging a few play dates before school gets out. An outing to the park or perhaps inside a warmer venue would be a great chance to get friends together for an afternoon of fun during this long break. See page 8 for the full schedule of school closures and childcare days.

"Aaron Kim models his MIR t-shirt. We went to Disneyland and he decided to wear his t-shirt. He is standing in front of the *It's a Small World* entrance. Aaron is in Primary and in Nikki's class."—Susan Kim.

Want to see your child's photo in the Bluebird Bulletin? Submit a picture of them in their Bluebird or MIR t-shirt to lisa.kensok@montessoriredlands.org.



Student Laura Andrade shows her Bluebird pride on a family vacation to Maui, Hawai'i.



Report from the Board

by PAMELA FORD, PRESIDENT

TWO SCHOOLS, ONE MISSION

What's the relationship between MIR and The Grove School? It is a pleasure to address this question because the number of connections between Grove and MIR, between Grove students and MIR students, between Grove staff and MIR staff, appears to be infinite.

Let's start with the basic educational philosophy that guides the mission of each school: that of Montessori. True, most Montessori schools in the U.S. serve children rather than adolescents. But because of the vision and commitment of some former MIR educators and families, The Grove School came to exist just at the end of the last millennium. Dr. Maria Montessori did live long enough to propose a curriculum for adolescents: she just didn't have enough time to work with it as she had worked with her curriculum for younger children. But Montessori educators following in her footsteps have been able to provide a continuation of her thinking so that our MIR children can continue to learn and work in an environment prepared appropriately for their stage of development. That's what Grove provides.

Following the place-based approach to learning that you are familiar with in your children's' MIR classrooms, Grove has environments built for the adolescents our children become. The Farm is a place ripe with animals, fruit-bearing trees, a garden, and historic buildings. All of these need the attention of our physically active and mentally strong adolescents who develop responsibility and commitment to large projects. These require students to develop their academic skills to accomplish their project goals. At the high school, the prepared environments extend beyond the classroom to help students continue to develop their minds and skills in even more abstract manners, on their pathways to adulthood.

As a former Grove parent, I like to remember that the Grove's student-planned Winterim events (weeklong events proposed, created, and developed

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Curriculum Matters

By PETER DAVIDSON,
ASSISTANT HEAD OF SCHOOL

THE IMPORTANCE OF RITUALS

"The things [a child] sees are not just remembered; they form a part of his soul."—Maria Montessori

As the holidays approach, I can't help but grow a bit nostalgic. In my childhood home, we celebrated Christmas. Picking a tree, decorating it and hanging up stockings were always big events for us. We would retrieve a special box from the attic that was packed with a tree stand, a lighted snowman for the lawn, and carefully packed lights and ornaments. But what was most special to me was an item in another box that we would only bring out once a year—the Lionel train set.

We'd set up the tracks to go around the tree in a corner of the living room and take turns running the train (a locomotive, 7 freight cars, and a caboose) around the tree and blowing the whistle—whoo, whoo. I can still hear that whistle and the clackety-clack the heavy locomotive made on those metal tracks. I vaguely remember a gift or two I received over the years, but what really made an impression were the holiday traditions of our family, especially the once-a-year ritual of decorating the tree and setting up the train.

When I grew up and had my own family, we developed our own seasonal rituals. We would go to a certain pumpkin patch each October, a favorite spot to watch 4th of July fireworks, and a particular mountain tree farm each December to cut our own Noble fir. There was also a special neighborhood we would walk through for their elaborate light displays, and a marina where we'd go to watch a lighted boat parade. And, yes, I made sure there was a

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CURRICULUM MATTERS *(cont.)*

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train set that only came out in December.

Our Montessori classrooms are not without their own sense of ritual, as well. Some are of the daily sort, like lunch with tablecloths and ceramic plates in Primary. Some are weekly, like the class meetings in Elementary. Some are more random, such as a birthday celebration during which the child carries a globe around a lighted candle while the class sings, “The earth goes around the sun...” MIR even has a monthly ritual when the entire school gathers at the flagpole for a Bluebird assembly.

CHILD IN NATURE *(cont.)*

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could be discomfort – that is, when it is wet and/or chilly. But children perceive the weather very differently. They are prone to forgoing a coat when it is cold and show sheer excitement when they get “caught” in the rain. Have you experienced squeals of laughter when the first drops of rain hit the top of your child’s head? They notice the tiny drops of water and the worms and insects that have come out to play in it. They are very attuned to nature and love to be in it.

Dr. Maria Montessori had a lot to say about this in her book *Discovery of the Child*. She saw the benefits to the child of interacting with nature and “setting the children free.” In her words:

“Sleeping in the open air, exposing himself to wind and rain, defying the sun, plunging into water, are all things about which we may talk at

length but which we do not always practice. Who is there who does not make haste to close a door for fear of a draft? And how many do not close the windows before going to sleep, especially if it is winter and it is raining? Almost everybody believes that to take very long walks in the open country, whether it is sun or rain, taking advantage of all natural shelter, is a heroic effort...

Set the children free, let them have fair play, let them run out when it is raining, take off their shoes when they find pools of water, and when the grass of the meadows is damp with dew let them run about with bare feet and trample on it; let them rest quietly when the tree invites them to sleep in its shade; let them shout and laugh when the sun wakes them up in the morning, as it wakes up every other living creature which divides its day between waking and sleeping....

And, of course, one can’t forget the upcoming annual ritual of gathering at the chapel at University of Redlands for the song, dance and performance of *Holiday Sing*.

There is something especially meaningful about traditions, and about the comforting repetition of ritual, whether in the classroom or the family. Ritual observance builds community, whether at school or at home. Rituals are important to children, giving them a sense of belonging and helping them find their “place” in their school, family, and society. We hope that you and your family find both meaning and comfort as you celebrate your own rituals and traditions this holiday season, and celebrate ours together at MIR.

When children are placed in natural surroundings, then there is the revelation of their strength. Normal babies, even when less than two years of age, if they are strong in constitution and well nourished, can walk for miles. The tireless little legs will climb long, steep slopes in the sunshine...

Only the poets feel the fascination of a tiny rivulet of water trickling over the pebbles as it is felt by the child, who grows enthusiastic over it, laughs and wants to stop and touch it with his hands as if to caress it. No one of whom I know...has admired the modest insect and the perfume of unattractive little plants, as does one of our little ones.”

As MIR closes for the winter break in December, I hope that all of you get a chance to enjoy some time with your family and perhaps take some time to enjoy nature in all its wet, windy, and wild glory.

HOLIDAY SING DRESS REHEARSAL SCHEDULE—DON’T BE LATE!

Dress rehearsals for Holiday Sing take place during the morning on Wednesday, December 18. Please be sure your child is at school on time. Children will be transported by bus to the University of Redlands.

All classes will rehearse at various times beginning at 9 AM. **It is important that all children arrive at school on time to get on the bus. Elementary students leave by 8:45 AM.** Otherwise, your child could miss their opportunity to rehearse.

Parents of Thursday/Friday Toddler students are welcome to bring their child to the University. You will have to remain with your child through the rehearsal. Check with your child’s teacher for exact times.

MIR SCRAPBOOK: Journey & Discovery and Halloween Carnival



MIR SPRING GALA

Saturday, March 8, 2014 | 6 PM - MIDNIGHT
The Mitten Building in Redlands



MIR is gearing up for the 17th Annual Spring Gala & Auction.

Our theme this year is "Like, Totally 80s," and we are stoked to the max just planning for this party.

What is the Spring Gala? First and foremost, it's a party! This is one of the most fun events for adults that MIR holds, with fabulous food, drinks, and dancing. **It is also a fundraiser** featuring live and silent auctions.

What's on auction? The auction will feature beautiful, hand-crafted items created by each class. These are not small items and can sell for quite a bit. An example is the *Tree of Life*, recreated by the students in Sara's class last year:



We will also be auctioning off other fun items such as a chance for your child to be Principal for a Day, prime parking spots, trips, and fabulous meals.

The silent auction features baskets that include tickets to events, spa days, services from local businesses, and more. Our silent auction is considered one of the best of the local auctions, with a lot of value for the money.

Why should I attend? Whether you go for the auction or go to watch, we promise, this party is awesome. This year's 80s theme is sure to be extra special, like your high school prom without the braces and zits and general teenage awkwardness. **And how do I dress?** People will dress in

80s wear or in semi-formal attire—how you dress is up to you, but we encourage you to have fun with the theme!

Tickets will go on sale in January.

Donations, Advertisers, Sponsors, and Volunteers Needed

More than 200 attendees collectively spent more than \$50,000 at the auction last year. **If you own a business, the auction offers a good opportunity for you to publicize it** either by advertising in our program book or sponsoring the event. Benefits at certain levels of sponsorship include being prominently featured in our ad displayed at the Krikorian Theatre in Redlands for one month.

We also welcome donations of goods or services for our live or silent auctions. **We are particularly in need of donations of time at vacation rentals.**

If you are interested in sponsoring, advertising, or donating goods or services, please contact Jill McDermott at jill.mcdermott@montessoriiinredlands.org for details.

Do you like to throw a great party? There are plenty of opportunities to help out with the Spring Gala.

- **If you're a whiz at making fabulous gift baskets,** we need your help wrapping silent auction items.
- **If you like shopping and love a good bargain,** help us put together great items for the silent auction baskets.
- **If you're a good "sales person,"** we could use your help soliciting for donations and advertisements.
- **If you have decorating talent,** we'd love your help setting up the day of the event. Clean up help is also needed!
- **If you don't have a lot of time** but would like to help, we're happy to have you!

Contact Jill McDermott at jill.mcdermott@montessoriiinredlands.org for details. Thank you!

Scenes from last year's auction: *An Evening in Paris*



REPORT FROM THE BOARD *(cont.)*

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by the students) are a more mature version of MIR's Elementary "going-out" activities. The farm animals require more robust care than the classroom pets at MIR. The internships that Grove students complete each year introduce them to the world of work, not unlike the tasks our elementary students undertake to fund their trips. And the community service hours that Grove students fulfill each year, often on a larger scale such as videotaping city council meetings or training young circus performers, have their

basis in the concept of helping others that our elementary students engage in when they do service in the Toddler or Primary classes.

The adult members of the Montessori community here in Redlands, both at Grove and at MIR, share a commitment to this educational opportunity for children and adolescents. Were you to examine the long list of former and current board members at each school, you would find parents (and alumni parents) from each school on each board. You would find that some staff members at Grove were once at MIR. You would find that com-

munity members who volunteer to help one school often serve to help the other as well. You would find that many supporters of both schools are also educators from college or university who see the benefits of this education in their students. Together we have the opportunity to provide a Montessori education for young people from 18 months to 18 years.

In light of this, you have probably heard that The Grove School charter is up for renewal. The Redlands Unified School District will review the Charter Renewal Application in their public meeting on December

10 at 7 PM. The meeting takes place at the district office at 25 W. Lugonia Ave. in Redlands.

You are encouraged to attend to show support for The Grove School's continued existence as a public charter Montessori school for adolescents, to help ensure the school remains open as an option for your children. Wear green (the school color) or a Grove t-shirt. Speaking time is very limited, and speakers have already been appointed, so we will be there to show our silent support and help RUSD see how much the school means to our community. I'll see you there!

HOLIDAY SING (cont.)

(Continued from page 1)

begins at 7 PM.

School will close at 3:30 PM on December 18 to give students a chance to rest and prepare. Children should be dropped off at University Hall at 6:30 PM.

Holiday Sing is a truly special annual performance that always draws a capacity crowd. After dropping off your child, we recommend you find a seat as quickly as possible.

COOKIES NEEDED

The performance is followed by a reception. We need 12 dozen cookies from each class for the reception (all three Toddler classes count as one). Cookies without nuts are especially appreciated. Please deliver cookies to the school by the day of the event. Thank you in advance for your help!

DVDS

Holiday Sing will be professionally recorded. DVDs can be pre-ordered via SchoolCues to share with distant family or for your own enjoyment.

THE BEST SEATS IN THE HOUSE

Each year at our Spring Gala we auction off prime Holiday Sing seating for 8 (enough for the whole family). Attend the Gala on Saturday, March 8, 2014 for your chance to get these seats for next year!

SCHOOL CALENDAR FOR THE HOLIDAY

December brings many holidays and a more complicated school schedule. Please note below the dates of class field trips and year-end holiday feasts, and be sure to check classroom notices for updates.

School will be closed starting December 23 and will re-open January 7. Childcare is available by reservation for all day December 30, for a half day on December 31, and all day January 2 and 3, 2014. Reservations will be done online. Monday, January 6, 2014 is a staff in-service day and school and childcare are closed.

Recital for Yang Chen’s music students: The winter recital for families of Yang’s music students will be held Thursday, December 12, 12-1 PM in Kelly’s classroom. Please contact Yang with any questions.

DO SOME HOLIDAY SHOPPING AT BARNES & NOBLE AND HELP MIR 6TH YEARS

MIR 6th year Elementary students will host a Barnes & Noble book fair 9-4 PM Saturday, December 7. **If you can’t join us at the store, order from BN.com/bookfairs December 7-11 using bookfair ID 10984870.**

On Friday, December 13, 6th years will hold their monthly breakfast burrito fundraiser. Get a hot breakfast for \$5 and support the students.

December 2013

Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri
2 PTM food drive begins	3 Lango classes	4	5 Kelly’s class—CA Theater of Performing Arts Lango classes	6
				7 Barnes & Noble bookfair, 9 AM-4 PM
9 	10 Emily’s 4th year trip to Mission San Juan Capistrano Grove Charter Renewal Meeting, 7 PM at the district office	11 Elementary book club, Frugal Frigate, 4 PM 	12 Nikki’s class holiday luncheon, 11 AM Yang Chen’s Music Recital, 12 PM	13 Payments due Breakfast Burritos Nikki—Bridges Auditorium Kara/Marie—Nutcracker Childcare reservations due PTM food drive ends
16 	17 Sara’s class potluck, 11 AM 	18 Classes travel by bus to U of R for rehearsal, 9:30-1:30 PM School closes at 3:30 PM Holiday Sing, 7 PM	19 Teesie—Solstice breakfast and pajama day, 8 AM Kelly—Solstice celebration Emily—Braswell’s Emily’s solstice party, 12:30 PM	20 Jean/MH—Lewis Family Playhouse Kara/Marie—Pajama party/book exchange, 9 AM Maria—Walk to Theron’s, 10 AM Emily—potluck brunch, 10 AM School closes at noon
23	24	25 	26 	27
School closed for the holidays. No school, no childcare.				
30	31	1	2	3
School closed for the holidays. No school, childcare by reservation.		School closed for New Year’s Day. No school, no childcare.	School closed for the holidays. No school, childcare by reservation.	
	Childcare closes at noon.			