



## Newsletter September 2019

### *A Message from the Head of School*

Dear Children's House Community,

It's hard to believe that September has come to a close! We've been so busy here at school. The students are fully engaged in their lessons, the teachers have established their routines, and the office is humming with activity from the start of the day to the end.

I want to thank all those who were able to attend the first meeting regarding the creation of a new organization that will help to support the school, as well as those that were not able to attend but are looking forward to being a part of the group. We'll have another meeting tonight, Thursday, October 4, at 5:30 in the Fellowship Hall. Please join us if you are able. Some of the school board members will also be present so people can meet them and ask any questions they may have.

You have likely noticed a new face in the office. Ms. Dani joined Children's House as a parent last school year, and just before we started in August, she joined us as a staff member as well. She has been invaluable in getting things organized and is a lovely addition to the office and the staff community overall. Currently, she is working on the student files, and making sure that everything is up to date. You may receive an email from her (or may have already) letting you know that we are missing materials. Please bring those in as soon as possible so that our files are up to date.

Field trips have begun! Yesterday, the Elementary students attended the Young People's Concert, performed by the Orlando Philharmonic, at the Bob Carr Theater. Thank you to Ms. Deborah for preparing the students by teaching them all about the composers featured, thank you to the teachers for allowing a full day field trip, and thank you to the parents who helped by driving and chaperoning. The students enjoyed the concert very much. The kindergarten students will be heading off to Ponce Inlet tomorrow to go to the Science Center. We're excited to hear all about their adventure!

Halloween is coming up quickly! The elementary students have begun researching historical figures that they will dress up as, and then give a presentation on. They will also be going to the retirement center to visit their senior friends. We'll have a short parade in the morning, and the carnival will be after school is dismissed at 11:30. We'll have more information about those events as the date draws near.

Take good care,  
Ms. Kelly



*"We discovered that education is not something which the teacher does, but that it is a natural process which develops spontaneously in the human being."  
~ Maria Montessori*

# Meet the School Board Members

## *Dora Mallett, School Board of Directors, President*

In 1984, Dora and her family moved to DeLand and was very pleased to enroll her two children, Joshua and Rebekah, in Children's House, as they had been in a Montessori preschool in Michigan. As a member of the Faith Lutheran congregation she was elected to the Children's House Board. In 1986, she was hired as the Administrative Assistant at Children's House. She shared administrative responsibilities with three Montessori teachers; Mimi Clark, Mary Koenig and Travis Williamson. There were only two Primary classrooms at that time. During the next nine years, the school expanded in size and reputation. We added the Lower Elementary, Upper Elementary and Adolescent programs. In 1995, the first full time administrator, Beverly Williams was hired. The school thrived during these years as community supporters formed the Friends of Montessori who raised funds for the enhancement of the school. Together, under Beverly's leadership, they were able to provide additional costly Montessori equipment for our classrooms, sponsor AMI candidates for training and certification, and funded the development of the Toddler program. Beverly Williams lost a battle with cancer in 2003, but everyone was determined to fulfill her dreams for Children's House. In 2006, Dora was appointed Administrator and with the support of the staff, parents and board, the school continued to strengthen the Montessori programs and secured the its reputation in the community. In 2014, Dora retired as the administrator and recalled the many lovely children, parents and incredible staff and board members with whom she had had the pleasure of working. She continues to see legacy students as second generations enroll, including her two granddaughters followed in their parents' footsteps. Her dedication to the school continues as she serves on the Board of Directors. Founded over 50 years ago, may Children's House Montessori School continue to impact the lives of future generations to come.



## *Peggy L. Fitzsimmons, School Board of Directors, Vice President*

Peggy is a retired Elementary Teacher who worked in the Volusia County Schools. She has lived in DeLand for 44 years, and has been involved with Children's House for 18 of those years. First, her children attended primary through third grade in the 80's, then she became an assistant teacher in the Primary environment and held that position for seven years. She has had five grandchildren who have also attended Children's House, three have moved on and two are still enrolled. Her youngest grandchild is 11 months, and will be starting at Children's House as soon as he is old enough. Her love for the school is strong and that is why she is on the Board of Directors, to help support the school and help it continue to grow and be a vital part of DeLand's community.



## *Helen Martin, School Board of Directors, Secretary*

Helen is from Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, and then lived in St. Thomas in the Virgin Islands before moving to DeLand in 1980 to be close to her family. She joined Faith Lutheran Church, and Children's House was part of the church's educational mission at that time. Her youngest child of four was enrolled at Children's House at the age of three for two years. After being a labor and delivery nurse for 31 years, Helen retired in 2011. She was elected to the School Board by the congregation about seven years ago. Helen's great-granddaughter, Laila, is currently enrolled in the Primary environment and Laila's half brother is enrolled in the Upper Elementary.



*Ella Wheeler, School Board of Directors, Treasurer*

Ella is originally from Peru, and has been in US since 1998. She has worked as a System Engineer at Volusia County for 21 years. She is the parent of three children who are alumni from Children House Montessori School. Her two daughters, Wendy and Amber started from Primary all the way to 8th grade and her son, Tommy from toddler to 8th grade. Ella was involved as a parent in community events, and helped with skills in Information Technology for the capital campaign to build the modular building for the Upper Elementary and Middle School. She is grateful for all the good teachers, assistants, and community of parents that she has been able to make friends with. Ella is the treasurer of the School Board and is thankful for the opportunity to help the school some more, as she thinks Children’s House is one of the best schools in Volusia County because the teachers care and give their love to the children.



*Joe DeGaetano, School Board of Directors*

Joe is a Deland native. He attended Children’s House from Kindergarten through eighth grade, graduating in 2003, and his daughter, Ella, attended from Kindergarten through third grade. Joe is a business analyst with JP Morgan Chase and has been with that company for over eleven years. He joined the school board because he has a vested interest in seeing the school flourish as it did when he attended. He wants to see the students receive the same quality experience that he did as a student. He serves the board by leveraging his personal experience as a former Children’s House student, as well as his business savvy and professional experience to help drive positive results and overall success for the school.



## *Middle School with Ms. Tara Choir*

Middle School has finished a Geology unit in Earth Science, and has begun working on their Model UN country research projects, as well as taking classes to get CPR certified in their Life Skills class. Next month some will be getting ready to write a novel in November (Nanowrimo), and everyone will be busy planning for the Halloween Carnival! We welcome any gift card donations to your favorite local bookshop, restaurant, coffee shop, etc for prizes. More details to come as we get closer to the event!

*“The principle goal of education in the schools should be creating men and women who are capable of doing new things, not simply repeating what other generations have done.”*

*~Jean Piaget*

Due to schedule changes this year, we are now offering Choir as an after school group. Open to students in second grade and higher, they will focus on ensemble building and choral singing. Students will have the opportunity to lead the all school sing at the holiday program, and those who return for another ten week session in the spring will be working towards and end of the year choir performance.

All the students will build confidence while learning to use their voices appropriately. Older students will have the opportunity to work on reading music and sight singing.

Ms. Jessica is a classically trained vocalist and pianist. She began performing professionally at age nine and continues to sing locally. She is excited to help continue the choir program this year!

Wednesdays, beginning on October 9, for 9 weeks, \$10/week or a total of \$90 for the first session. 3:15-4:15 each day. Please provide a snack for your child. Middle School students who are interested can join at 3:30. Please come to the office for more information.

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## *Primary with Ms. Amy and Ms. Morgan*

Ms. Amy's class began studying North America! We also celebrated birthdays for Macy and Finn in September. Our kindergarteners will have their first field trip of the year to the Marine Science Center in Ponce Inlet tomorrow, October 4. We're looking forward to seeing some new and amazing things!



This Primary student is doing a follow up lesson with the Stamp Game, a math lesson.

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## *Lower Elementary with Ms. Princess and Ms. Nikki*

In Ms. Princess's class, we are working on a lot of challenging math work. Such as, bead frame, snake game, bank game and racks and tubes. We are also working on lots of reports; Halloween, planets and dinosaurs.

Some of us are working on how the world was made by writing our own coming of life story, the first great story. All third years went to visit the Health Center last Friday. We visited the residents and played games with them. It was a lot of fun!

This month's article was written by Paxton B. and Shiloh G.

*Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world.*

*~ Nelson Mandela*

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## *Lower Elementary with Ms. Nettie and Ms. Kalie*

Lower Elementary students have been busy researching favorite animals and writing reports, creating posters, and presenting their work to the class. Third year students made their first trip to the Health Center last Friday to visit the residents. They enjoyed playing games and being in community with them. We have also been tracking our favorite and most challenging reads. We are also halfway a through our first chapter book read aloud, The Wild Robot. Next month we look forward to giving book reviews to the class!



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## *Musically Speaking....*

The music room has been lively and exciting! The students have been participating in different movement activities, experiencing instruments, and singing. The Elementary students have also been learning about different composers in preparation for the Young People's Concert, which was on October 2. Two Children's House students were selected to help lead the audience in the singing of the Star Spangled Banner (pictured below).



## *Breathe, Move, Relax*



It has been a great start to the school year! I would like to introduce myself. My name is Sunny, and I am the Yoga, Meditation and Physical Education instructor. I also substitute in the classroom environments when needed. I have four children from ages 24 to 8, and they have all attended Children's House, with my youngest currently in Ms. Nettie's class.

The Middle School students start each day with meditation. It is a time to ground their energy, quiet their minds, and let go of anything that may be no longer serving them. They are practicing quieting their minds and checking in with their breath and body. It is a beneficial way to start the first 15 minutes of their day. In PE, they have created a list of activities they are interested in trying. So far, we have done kickball, basketball, and volleyball. We have started working on our core muscles three times per week. Our goals are to build our skills in how to be a good team member, clear communication and respect.

Yoga is body awareness, balance, flexibility, coordination, mindfulness, connecting to their breath to facilitate movement, and proper alignment. It helps with relaxation, quieting the mind, and showing respect to ourselves and the class as a whole. During our yoga time, we also discuss anatomy and learn the proper names of the bones. In October, we will study the individual bones in the hands and feet! We also practice poses and use our breath to facilitate the movement. The most important part of our class is the Savasana (pronounced Shavasana), which is a relaxation pose. This is where they practice quieting their minds, relaxing their muscles, and following their breath. This helps soothe the nervous system and brings peace of mind. This gives the children the opportunity to check in with themselves and take a moment to relax.

## *Donations Needed*

The Middle School class is in need of the following items. If you have any to donate, please bring them to the classroom or to the office.

### Plastic - (please rinse them out first)

Gallon Milk Jugs  
Coffee Creamer Bottles  
2 Liter Bottles

### Metal

Broken Tools (broken pliers, old wrenches etc)  
Old Silverware (especially spoons)  
Horseshoes  
Bottle Caps  
Metal Food Cans  
Tomato Stands  
Tools (random odds and ends like door hinges, screws, nuts, bolts, washers)

Glass Jars (any size)  
5 Gallon Buckets with Lids

*Thank  
You*

# Spirit Night at Moe's!

Friday, October 4 5:00-9:00

941 N. Woodland Blvd, DeLand

Look for the marked container, and drop in your receipt!



## *What's Growing in the Garden?*

Hurricane Dorian toppled two of our banana trees. Fortunately, we were able to save the banana bunches and ripen them on our patio. Once ripened, the bananas were shared with the students. They were delicious!

Some of the daily activities in the garden include watering and weeding of our garden beds. Over the past few weeks students have planted radishes, carrots, kale, tatsoi and Swiss chard in the garden as well as thyme, sage and oak leaf lettuce in flats. Miss Jessica started some tomato and pepper plants at home this summer which were also planted in our garden.



This month students started an exciting project; they propagated basil plants. Leaf cuttings of the plants taken by the children were placed in a small jar of water (a big thank you to the families that donated yogurt and baby food jars). In a few days enough roots grew, and the plants were ready to be potted into soil. The students enjoyed observing and caring for their new basil plants.

Students routinely care for our animals, both domestic and wild, by ensuring that they have food and fresh water. BunBun, the rabbit, enjoys being brushed and our hens love to eat the dried corn that students grind for them with the mortar and pestle. Some students have made bird feeders for the local birds by covering a toilet paper tube with peanut butter and rolling it in bird seed. The tubes are hung on trees in our garden and enjoyed by the birds as well as the squirrels.

In the chicken yard, students started learning about the external body parts of a chicken. We discussed a picture of a chicken's anatomy and then found the body parts on one of our chicken volunteers. Not all of our hens were interested in helping with this lesson. :0)



## En español

In Primary, the children have been learning their numbers. Some have been introduced up to ten, and others up to one hundred. They are also learning how to greet their friends.

In Lower Elementary, there is a range of lessons happening. Many lessons are reinforced by multisensory approaches. The students are working on how to greet each other and ask how the other person is, and how to respond. They have been practicing numbers, days of the week, and colors in both Spanish and sign language. The children have been learning how to say the months and their birthdays in Spanish which aids them in solidifying their knowledge in English.

In Upper Elementary, they have been focusing more on the vowels and consonants, r's, double r's, rolling their r's, ñ, and splitting up words into syllables to aid them in spelling the words. Some of the groups discuss the different parts of speech.

In Middle, they started the year off with review. In seventh, they are practicing things like asking a friend about where they are from and then answering that question, Spanish speaking countries, and they are getting ready to talk about the weather. Eighth is working on prepositions, the regular verb *estar* and in vocabulary, they've been working on school supplies and the rooms in the school.



Lower Elementary students using movement to reinforce their Spanish lesson.



The Montessori materials are even used during Spanish lessons! Here, a child is learning to say, and spell, the colors in Spanish.

*El que lee mucho y anda mucho,  
ve mucho y sabe mucho.*

*~Miguel de Cervantes Saavedra*

## *Toddler with Ms. Tashira and Ms. Stephanie*

During the month of September, the toddlers have been experimenting with clay! Now that they have settled into the routine a little more, they are more able to focus on the individual Montessori lessons. As with the older classes, attendance is so important in the Toddler environment. At this age, consistency is the key to success in any area.

When children are out, they lack the consistency they need to progress forward. Please be sure your toddler is in school regularly, and that you establish a good routine that you can stick to each morning so they arrive on time. It makes such a difference in their time at school!



# From the Reading Nook

## Suggested Books for October

### Toddler Room:

*Halloween Colors* by Barbara McGrath  
*The Day of the Dead* by Bob Barner  
*The Scarecrow* by Beth Ferry

### Primary Rooms:

*Hank's Big Day: The Story of a Bug* by Evan Kuhlman  
*Chicken on a Broom* by Adam Lehrhaupt  
*How Do You Dance?* by Thyra Heder

### Lower Elementary Rooms:

*The Berenstain bears Happy Halloween!* by Stan Berenstain  
*Day of the Dead: A Celebration of Life and Death* by Amanda Doering  
*Beneath the Bed and Other Scary Stories* by Max Brallier

### Upper Elementary:

*Goosebumps Wanted: The Haunted Mask* by R.L. Stine  
*The Day of the Dead Mystery* by Gertrude Chandler Warner  
*The Sun is Also a Star* by Nicole Yoon

### Middle School:

*The Storm Runner* by Jennifer Cervantes  
*The House With Chicken Legs* by Sophie Anderson  
*We'll Fly Away* by Bryan Bliss



As a school, we are passionate about ensuring that our students find a love of reading. Whether they are fluid readers, or striving readers, we support the students in literacy with the help of the Orton-Gillingham (OG) approach. The staff has received OG classroom training to use in addition to the Montessori literacy lessons.

October is Dyslexia Awareness Month. Dyslexia is a specific learning disability that is neurobiological in origin. It is characterized by difficulties with accurate and/or fluid word recognition, poor spelling, and decoding abilities. It's one of the most common causes of reading difficulties. For more information about Dyslexia, please visit [dyslexiaida.org](http://dyslexiaida.org) or [understood.org](http://understood.org).

If you want a resource that provides many developmentally-appropriate books for children, please visit [FirstBook.org](http://FirstBook.org). This website lists books by age range and subject.

## Congratulations!

Ms. Alicia, who volunteers to help support in literacy, her husband, Kevin and their daughter, Amelia, welcomed their newest family member. Carson arrived on September 19. At 20 inches and 7 pounds, 4 ounces, he arrived healthy and happy. Both Alicia and Carson are doing well, and the whole family is loving this special time. Welcome to the world Carson!



## Upper Elementary with Ms. Esther and Mr. Keegan

The Upper Elementary students are eagerly discussing how to choose a new class pet. This month, two of our students brought in their pets from home to spend a day in our classroom. These students were able to teach their classmates a little about their animals, and how to properly care for them. Interacting with animals is always a favorite activity for our students, and so this led to conversations about which animals might make a good addition to our classroom. In the upcoming weeks, students will research potential pets and decide together which pet would be best. Past pets have included red-bellied toads and a hamster. Watch this space to see which animal will be joining our classroom this year!

"I brought Nutella, the hamster, to school. She is a very playful hamster. I brought her because I thought she wanted a lot of attention because she was chewing on the bars of her cage. I wanted to see if she would make a good class pet. I think it would take time for her to get used to the classroom but I think Nutella would be a good class pet. I think she would make a good class pet because she likes attention and she is playful. I would to bring her again and let her try running around in her ball. Hamsters are easy to take care of." – Evie G.





## Primary with Ms. Caitlyn and Ms. Cori

September has been a wonderful month and our classroom has truly grown in so many ways. We've learned so much about each other and have truly created some great friendships amongst our community. We're concluding our Space and Solar System explorations this month, and will be moving into new studies! Enjoy some lovely conversations with your children by asking them about planets, astronauts, Earth, and anything to do with our Universe. We've truly enjoyed this exciting subject and all it encompasses. For the month of October, we will be diving into our home continent of North America, and all of its beauty and amazement. Throughout that culture introduction, we will also be learning about, and enjoying all things, Halloween!

Just as a reminder, our first kindergarten field trip is tomorrow, Friday, October 4. We're so ready to explore the beautiful beach of Ponce Inlet on our Eco Walk and become junior Marine Biologists at the Marine Science Center!

As always, thank you for entrusting us with your children and their journey through the beginnings of their educational careers. We're so excited for all the things to come this month!



After using the puzzle map as a guide for coloring in each country on the continent map, the children then write the names of each country.

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## Grace and Courtesy

You may have heard teachers talk about Grace and Courtesy, particularly in the Primary environments. An excerpt from <http://www.infomontessori.com/practical-life/grace-and-courtesy-introduction.htm>:

*"Montessori introduced Exercises in Grace and Courtesy in reaction to the young child's need for order. The child has a need to know and to absorb the social structures in order to be more at ease in his environment. Grace and Courtesy lessons give the child the vocabulary, actions, and steps required for him to build his awareness and responsiveness of those around him. This in turn gives the child a better sense of orientation in his social structure."*

*"Grace and Courtesy lessons are given to each child in the environment and usually in a group. This allows the child to have a clear understanding as well as a place to perfect himself with others. It is the Directress's role to give the children the correct words, and the precise movements and steps. The child then fully absorbs the how, the when, and the vocabulary used in his environment to make life more pleasant for other and for him."*

*"In the end, the child will have incorporated these graces and courtesies into his everyday life, which will allow for a more pleasant classroom as well as a more pleasant environment wherever the child may go."*

As a staff, we practice grace and courtesy with each other, with the parents, and with the children. We do this because the best way to teach a behavior is to model the behavior you wish to see. This practice extends into the students lives at home and in the community at large. As adults, we can sometimes forget that the children are watching us, and listening to our words, to learn the appropriate way to interact with others. It is so important that all of the adults in the community model grace and courtesy towards one another so the students will see that model as the one to emulate.

Let's be a constant source of support and encouragement for one another! What we build together in positivity will be nearly impossible to tear down with negativity.

