

# NEWS LETTER

MEHER  
GARDEN HARVEST



EDUCATION THROUGH NATURE



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[www.mehermontessori.org](http://www.mehermontessori.org)



JOHN F. PAGE

Meher Founder and Executive Director **John F. Page** will be in attendance for two hours at the Open House between 11:00 am – 1:00 pm to answer all of your questions about the Montessori Method and Meher Montessori School.

## Public Open House

On Saturday, March 7th, 2020 from 10:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m. we will have a Public Open House. Get a \$100 tuition credit if you recommend someone to attend who then registers and enrolls.



## ► **We ask all children to be at school by 8:15 a.m. Why bring your child on time?**

1. You get the most for your money. You give your child the best opportunity to progress academically, to more deeply understand the work shown to him and enough time to practice with the materials.
2. You set a good example for life about the importance of being on time to your child.
3. The first hours of the day in the classroom tend to be the time that the children work with the greatest concentration. This is when their minds are free from the distraction of the activities of the day.
4. When your child comes into the classroom late, this is a disturbance to the children who have already settled down to do their work.
5. Coming to school late can give a message to your child that school is not important and it does not matter when you arrive.

## ► **Spring Break Mark your calendars!**

**April 13th – April 17th.**

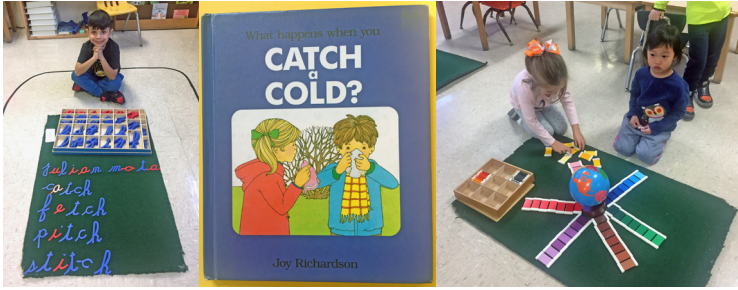
## ► **Taxes**

Some parents' tax situation permits them to deduct some or all of the money they pay to the School as child care expense. If you are able to do this, you will need the School's tax I.D. number, which is [95-3193683](tel:95-3193683).

## ► **Updates**

- Please update school of any important contact change, such as address, cell phone, work phone or email.
- Also, please let the school/teacher know of any important family change, such as a death, loss of a pet, or parent separation.

Thank you. Mrs. Muñoz



Hello dear parents. This month there were two activities in the first week of February, Education through Nature presentation and our First Friday Coffee. The nature presentation was fun and educational and the children heard very informative facts concerning reptiles' home, food, likes and dislikes, and habitat. The children were able to touch them (if they wanted to) and ask questions during our classroom discussion time. They also saw some bugs, insects, and crawling animals. The children thanked the presenter and wished they had more time with him. Our First Friday Coffee went smoothly from 7:00 to 8:30 am. Most parents stopped by to have a little chat and poured their desired drink in a "to go" container. Others stayed a little bit longer to sit and chat with us. For those parents who haven't had the chance to come, there are still at least four more months left with our First Friday Coffee event. Thank you for your time spent with us in these events.

This month of February we have two important holidays: Lincoln's Birthday and Presidents' Day! I read two books to the children that have to do with the Presidents of the U.S. At the end of these stories, most wanted

to be President of the U.S. based on the model and hard work shown by these presidents. For example Abraham Lincoln is noted for always speaking what is on his mind and speaking up for others. He also emphasized the importance of reading books.

All children are taking great leaps forward in their work. Older children are working on maps of different countries including the United States and those of North and South America. They are moving on into sentence patterns and word placement. They are making sentences of their own in their journal notebooks as they are given a picture to describe. All this work is geared towards improving their spelling and cursive writing. The younger children are moving along with their learning of phonics, numbers and rug works in the sensorial, math and language areas. The children are showing growth in being helpful to both teachers and their peers.

As always, I am indebted to Ms. Bayon for her untiring care for all our children. This month under her guidance they made a pink heart with each of their hands imprinted on it. Thank you so very much Ms. Bayon, appreciate all you do in our classroom.

We had our Valentine's Day snack party on Wednesday, February 12th because of the AMI Refresher Course that began Friday. School Shirt Day will be this February 28th. Please help us attain a 100% School Shirt by seeing to it that your child WEARS his shirt on that day. We did not make 100% in last month's School Shirt Day. Maybe this time we'll make it! Parent Night will be this Thursday, February 20th. Looking forward to seeing all my parents at this event.

Love,  
Mrs. Rivera  
Ms. Bayon



**HAPPY LUNAR NEW YEAR!**

**Personality of the Rat**

People born in the Year of the Rat are instinctive, acute and alert in nature which makes them to be brilliant businessmen. They can always react properly before the worst circumstances take place. They are also sophisticated and popular in social interaction. They are sanguine and very adaptable, being popular with others.

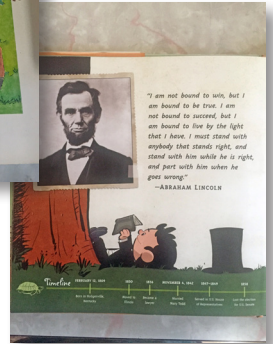
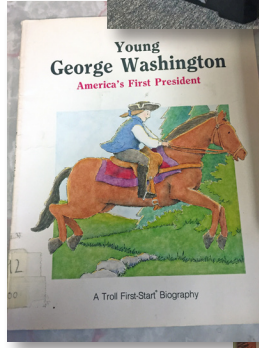
**Strengths**

Adaptable, smart, cautious, acute, alert, positive, flexible, outgoing, cheerful

**Weaknesses**

Timid, unstable, stubborn, picky, lack of persistence, querulous

**A TORTOISE**



**AUSTRALIAN COCKROACH**





Happy February!

First, I want to thank everyone who attended and brought food for our Chinese New Year Lunch-in. It was a great success. The children enjoyed the stories, history, food, and decorations that came with our celebration.

We have two new students in our classroom; Allyson Phung and Kathlyn Acosta. They are adjusting to our environment, receiving lots of practical life lessons, and being reminded by the other children of our classroom rules and routine.

On February 5th, the children got an "Education through Nature" presentation where they were able to see, touch, and learn about different bugs, reptiles, and mammals. They saw Australian cockroaches, tarantulas, a tortoise, a corn snake, and a sugar glider. They were interested to learn more about animals after the presentation. I took this opportunity to read different books to them about bugs, sea creatures, and 'see-through' animals. They were engaged, interested, and asked great questions about them as well.

Parents, a reminder that Parent

Night will be on February 20 from 6:30-7:30 pm. Please come with general comments and/or questions about the classroom. Parent Night is held in your child's classroom and just a friendly reminder that children are not allowed to come. If you have specific questions about your child, please don't hesitate to come and speak to me privately. I'm available daily from 7:00- 8:00 A.M. and 3:00-3:30 P.M.

This month School Shirt Day lands on February 28. Parents, please set a reminder for your child to help us attain 100% on that day. Unfortunately, we didn't get 100% participation for January.

Thank you everyone, for your continuous trust in Mrs. Suh and myself in your child's education. It has been a great journey so far. The children are becoming more independent and focused with their work. This is our main goal for the children in normalizing the classroom.

Thank you,  
Ms. Lopez and Mrs. Suh

### Class News

Though there are no February birthdays in my class, there are plenty of special days and activities going on. Not one but two Monday holidays to honor Presidents, Valentine's Day, and the AMI Montessori Refresher Course in Seattle, WA! We had a special Valentine's Party and Mrs. Gonzalez showed the students how to make a seasonal craft of a heart with wings to decorate the class.

Thank you to Melissa for bringing Meyer lemons from her home. She and a few friends helped make fresh-squeezed lemon juice for our class to try and it was delicious!

We also had a fun visit from "Education Through Nature" - Amazing Animals and got to interact with and learn more about cool creatures like tarantulas, snakes, and tortoises.



### Curriculum News

At Garden Harvest we revisited the topic of the flower, introducing the lesson called Parts of the Flower. Mrs. Gonzalez accompanies children to the garden to see flowers growing and the third years help identify the parts. In class I lead students through the Parts of a Flower nomenclature cards and students record the parts in their

lesson books.

Children are learning shading and practicing texture in their art lessons. They practice these during the week after receiving a lesson, and they really enjoy choosing this work.

Read aloud this month is "**The Secret Garden**" by *Frances Hodgson Burnett*. This is considered classic literature and it is one of my favorite books from when I was their age.

Our class poem is titled "**Today**", by *Thomas Carlyle*. It begins like this:

**So here hath been dawning  
Another blue day;  
Think, will thou let it  
Slip useless away?**

We continue to do word study, grammar, spelling, punctuation, and capitalization, and many children enjoy writing creative stories, then sharing them with the class. Other topics that are practiced and taught are math facts, place value, geometry nomenclature, word problems, measurement, and dynamic addition and subtraction. Force and motion is also a popular topic, with some children building models like catapults and ferris wheels out of everyday household materials to show examples of levers and wheels.

### Calendar News

There was no school Monday, February 10 for Lincoln's birthday, and no school on Monday, February 17 for President's Day. I will hold Parent Night in my classroom on February 20 from 6:30-7:30 pm. Lastly, School Shirt Day is Friday, February 28.

Happy February Families! It's cupid's month, but I couldn't tell you why we celebrate Valentine's Day in February. On the other hand, I know that Frederick Douglas's birthday has to do with the reason that we celebrate Black History month in February. Anyway, Black History month feels like an appropriate time to delve into a study of the American government.

### Chemistry presentation and beyond

The students presented their science experiments between February 10 and February 14. Accompanying their experiments was a description of the chemical reactions their experiments created and include a chemical equation to illustrate the reaction and a brief explanation of the atomic machinations taking place unseen at the microscopic level. A few of the experiments, like elephant toothpaste, shooting off rockets with the product of chemical reactions, and mixing mentos with coca cola will be vetted for safety. One experiment that creates a dangerous gas was discussed, but not carried out!

After the experiments are presented, we will begin to lay the foundation for the students' next presentation, which will entail a study of our constitutional democracy and, more generally, an examination of the rise of human civilizations.

### Update on our classes

I mentioned in last month's newsletter that we would be starting two new classes towards the end of January - Micro-economy (business) and Drama, Well, they've started, and I wanted to give a brief update on them and our Spanish class.

In micro-economy, the students are discussing different personality types as a means of learning how to collaborate effectively with a variety of personalities.

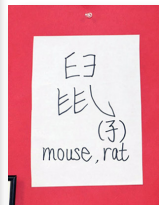
In drama class, the students first do vocal exercises to warm up the voice and stretches to loosen up the body. Then, the class plays "improv" games, as a means to be less self conscious about performing (or speaking) in front of others and learning to think on their toes, so to speak.

Lastly, in Spanish class, which started earlier in January, the students have begun to study pronouns and conjugations.

### Until next time

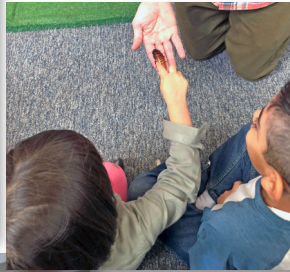
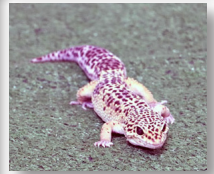
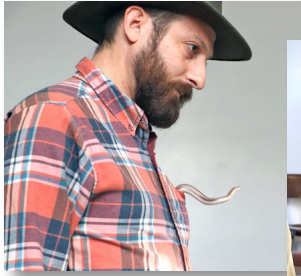
Finally, the teachers went to Seattle February 14th for the annual Association Montessori International Refresher Conference. This year the conference will focus on history, so I look forward to hearing, and then sharing, some of the ideas I have learned!

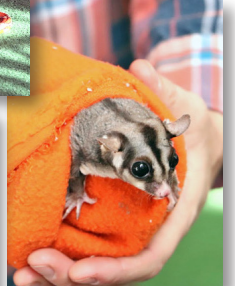
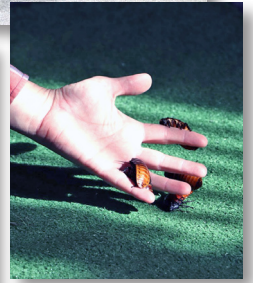
Until next month,  
Len Mindes













### Open House

On Saturday, March 7th, from 10:00 - 2:00, Meher will have its second Public Open House. Please spread the word to any friends you have who may interested.

### In The Classroom

Many parents have asked about the new teacher your child has talked about at home. For those who are unaware, we have a student-teacher for the first three weeks of February. Her name is Miss Li. She is completing her AMI Montessori training from MISD, the same institute where Miss Tinajero, Miss Sykes, and I all completed our AMI training. Every day, I give Miss Li a list of lessons to present to certain children in class. Not only is she presenting lessons, but she has also been leading group time in the afternoons. This will culminate in her running the entire classroom the week of the 18th. As Miss Li is currently not working in a classroom setting, this practical experience is essential to understanding classroom management. The children have been excited to receive lessons from a new person. And Miss Li has commented on how

great it has been that so many of the kiddos have been so open to receiving lessons from her.

This month we have spent a lot of time talking about Black History Month. We have been reading books and reflecting (as much as children of this age can reflect) about how everybody is just as good as anybody else. It is not the color of our skin, the shape of our eyes, or the curl of our hair that matters. It is what is on the inside that counts. Hearts filled with love and kindness are what matters. I have made sure to include books that celebrate the beauty of our uniqueness as well.

Additionally, we are listening to a broad spectrum of music from black musicians. So far, we have listened to reggae, pop, jazz, and Motown. After we listen to music, we watch a short video performance of the musician on YouTube to help the children put a face to the name.

We also spent the end of January and the beginning of February learning about Chinese New Year. We have been reading about the 12 animals in the horoscope and what

they represent, as well as identifying the children in each year. This year is the year of the rat. We have also learned about the rituals designed to usher in good luck for the New Year and scare away the bad luck. The children have been amazing when it comes to making connections and recalling something from one book to tie into another book. I would also like to thank Oliver and Emma Kim for providing the class with red decorations to bring good luck to our classroom.

We are on a two-month streak for School Shirt Day! This month's cooking activity will be slightly different than usual. The children will get to frost and decorate freshly baked sugar cookies on Valentine's Day. Look for more details about that, and Valentine's Day in general, in next month's newsletter. School Shirt for February will be on the 28th. Hopefully, we make it a three-month streak with 100% participation. If we do, March's cooking activity will be Irish Soda Bread, my very favorite thing to bake with the children.

### **Next Month**

As of press time, the class had not yet celebrated Valentine's Day or President's Day. Look for those topics to be covered in March's newsletter. Parent Night highlights will also be in next month's newsletter. Also, for the third year in a row, we will cover Women's Month in March. If anyone would like to come in a give a presentation or read a book honoring Women's Month, please contact me to set up a time.



### **First Friday Coffee Socials**

I want to thank the parents who have been able to attend any of this year's coffee socials. They are on the first Friday of every month from 7:15 - 8:15 am. Next month's will be on Friday, March 6th. For parents who are interested, but unsure of the formality, or conversation topics, it really is a relaxed environment. These are not designed to be mini-conferences. These are informal social gatherings where topics of conversation have included, cribs and sleep habits, action movies, coming up with children's names, traveling with a family, and AMI Montessori versus non-AMI Montessori. If you have the time, it would be great if you popped in for March's coffee social.

Until Next Month,  
Mrs. Wildhaber,  
Miss Tinajero  
Miss McCray & Miss Sykes





Julie Jargon

February 11, 2020

## Mind Those Manners: Kids Need Lessons in Email and Phone Etiquette

When it comes to making calls  
and composing messages,  
a lack of social graces isn't  
something to LOL about



of abbreviations and emojis.

Ms. McCraw is so serious about it that she has made email composition a part of her students' language arts grade. Each week she has her middle-school students email her about assignments they have completed in Google documents, just to get them in the habit. If the memos don't contain a subject line, a salutation and a signature, they get marked down.

If the email addresses of Amanda McCraw's eighth-graders didn't contain some portion of their names, she would have no clue who the senders were.

"There's no subject line, no signature. It's just, 'Hey, can you send me that paper?'" said Ms. McCraw, a teacher and principal at a tiny school in rural Paicines, Calif.

Texting may be second nature to many kids, but composing an email seems like an ancient craft. And making calls—or answering one from a stranger? That's so last century. Educators and parents are trying to teach kids digital etiquette so that when they enter the workforce, they will be able to communicate using words instead



Still, she doesn't often email them. So when she sent her students an email last year to congratulate them on their hard work, they printed it out. "They thought it was so cute. It was as if they were getting

a greeting card in the mail,"Ms.McCraw said. "They think email is antiquated because they're all on WhatsApp, but email is still the number one form of communication in the workplace and it's so important for their college and career readiness."

Email may indeed seem quaint in an age of thumb typing and voice memos, but Ms. McCraw is right about its dominance. Despite newer workplace messaging systems such as Slack, 95% of respondents to a Public Relations Society of America survey said they use email for internal employee communications, and 91% said email is still used to communicate with people outside the organization.

Melissa Griffin, who has been a human-resources manager at several large companies, said she has seen a decline in basic communication skills among entry-level workers in the last decade and she attributes it, in part, to smartphones.

"You can graduate high school without hardly ever having made a call. You can do everything online—book reservations, book an Uber. Teens aren't hearing their parents make calls either," she said. "When I was younger, my parents did all of that out loud and I was learning by listening. You'd pick up all that etiquette."

She said many large companies now offer basic communications training for new employees, such as how to politely answer a phone.

Ms. Griffin, of San Antonio, also said kids aren't being given an opportunity

to develop those skills because so many parents now handle everything for their children. She is trying to make sure her three kids—ages 15, 11 and 6—get plenty of practice. She's also trying to spread tips on how to build real-world skills to other parents through her Facebook page, HR Mom.

When her kids are raising money for various activities, she insists that they email relatives to request donations. "You have to artificially create scenarios for your children to use email," she said.

Once her children reach the fifth grade, she has them email their teachers if they have a question about an assignment or are going to be absent. "That shows them that they own their education," she said.

Her oldest child's first emails to teachers were blunt one-liners that didn't pass Ms. Griffin's review. Over time, she said, he got used to the style and tone of a formal email.

Some education experts say basic life skills are no longer taught in school because of the emphasis on meeting state standards in core subjects such as math and literacy. In special education, however, the goal is often to foster independent living. Children are still learning skills that will translate to the real world, including sending email, said Caitlin Hynes, a teacher in Northborough, Mass., who runs a post-high-school special-ed program for 18- to 22-year-olds. When students come to her from a specialized program, she said, they often have a better grasp on the basics than the kids who have been in more inclusive high-school settings.

Daniel Post Senning, great-great-grandson of manners maven Emily Post, and an author and spokesman for The Emily Post Institute, has a more optimistic and historical perspective on the matter.

Some parts of Emily Post's original 1922 classic "Etiquette," such as those having to do with table manners, remain the same today. "In the chapter on communication, there isn't a single thing that looks the same," he said.

"I wouldn't say manners around communication are in a state of decline, but they change the most rapidly. New manners emerge as old manners fall out of function," he added. "When the phone was first introduced, people thought it was the end of civilization and that no family would ever dine together again, but society didn't collapse."

Still, he said, phone and email are the two most requested areas of etiquette education that the institute receives, and manners around those primary communication methods must be taught and practiced.



Carlos Valdez and his wife have taught their 11-year-old son, Nathan, to call his

friends' parents when he wants to hang out with his friends, and to email his teachers when he has a question about a grade. "The first time he wanted to talk to one of his friends we gave him the mom's phone number and told him to say, 'Good afternoon, may I speak with so-and-so?'" said Mr. Valdez, a small-business owner near Sacramento, Calif.

He said he hopes those skills will prepare his son for the real world. "You can't send a snap to your boss—at least not yet," he said.

## Email Etiquette

Elements of a good email, according to The Emily Post Institute's Daniel Post Senning:

1. **Craft a clear subject line:** This is an increasingly important digital courtesy in an age of overstuffed inboxes, because the subject line can help people sort, tag and find the email later.
2. **Use proper salutations and closings:** These help set the tone for the communication.
3. **Don't include text-speak:** Avoid abbreviations and emojis in emails.
4. **Minimize the use of exclamation points.**
5. **Don't write in all capital letters.**

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