



At IMSP, the month of December brings great excitement as the children prepare for their final performance of "Winter Joy"! This is a busy time of year full of celebrations, family activities and reflection both about the past year, and also about what makes our lives truly significant. We hope that you enjoy this last month of the year and find renewed meaning and joy in the coming year! We look forward to seeing you in January, 2011!

December Events

Date	Event	Details
Mon., Dec. 6th	Theater practice for primary children	12:30-2:30 Please notify the school if your child will not be picked up at the theater.
Mon., Dec. 6th	Dance class practice for younger children	3:00-3:45 and 3:45-4:30 in Primary 2; ALL other Enrichment classes are cancelled 12/6-12/10
Tues., Dec. 7th	PA meeting	8:45-9:45 am in the lunch/child care room
Tues., Dec. 7th	Theater practice for elementary children	12:30-2:30 Please notify the school if your child will not be picked up at the theater.
Thur., Dec. 9th	Theater practice Dress Rehearsal (prim.&elementary)	12:30-2:30 Please notify the school if your child will not be picked up at the theater.
Fri., Dec. 10th	Winter Concert	10-12 at Zahrada. Half day of school. No lunch. Childcare reservation deadline by Dec. 3 Childcare hours are 12-3 pm.
Tues., Dec. 14th	Montessori Madness Book Club	8:45-10:00 am discussion about Chapters 1-10.
Fri., Dec. 17 th	Primary-Teddy Bear Picnic	Half day of school for ALL. No lunch or childcare
Mon., Dec. 20th	Winter Holiday begins	No school Dec.20 th -Jan. 7th

Montessori Quote: "Whoever touches the life of the child touches the most sensitive point of a whole which has roots in the most distant past and climbs toward the infinite." - Maria Montessori

January Events

Date	Event	Details
Mon., Jan. 10th	School and Enrichment classes resume	Welcome Back!
Wed., Jan. 12th	Fire Drill	Fire Drill slippers sent home afterwards for washing
Wed., Jan. 19th	Primary/Elementary Workshop for potential 1st graders	Lower elementary classroom 3:15-4:00 pm
Thur., Jan. 20th	Newsletter articles	Due for February newsletter
Wed., Jan. 26th	Toddler Workshop	3:15-4:00 pm
Wed., Feb. 2nd	Elementary Workshop	3:15-4:00 pm in Lower Elementary & Upper Elementary
Fri., Feb. 4th	Teacher Workday	Childcare is available 8:00-3:00; reservation deadline is Jan. 28th

Thank you, parents, for supporting our first Book Fair at the end of November! It was a great success and provided us with more information as to what kinds of books we should make available next time..

Announcements:

- ❖ **The children's Winter Concert songs can be found at, www.montessori.cz/songs.zip. Please practice and sing along with them at home!**
- ❖ **Observation sign-up sheets are available for the Primary and Elementary classrooms on the Parent Board.**
- ❖ **There will be NO Afternoon Enrichment Classes held the week of Dec. 6th-10th, except for the younger dancers on Monday.**
- ❖ **The school office holiday hours are:
Dec. 20th-23rd, open 8:00am to 4:00pm;
Closed Dec. 27- 31;
Jan.3-7, open 8:00am to 4:00pm.**
- ❖ **The glass room on the left side of IMSP, as you are facing it, is for donated books that may be borrowed. The door will be unlocked during school hours and locked at 5 pm. Please contact Anita Ramani, mootsielover@yahoo.com, to donate and/or borrow books.**
- ❖ **All bicycles will be stored in the other glass room on the right side of the building if they need to be inside. Otherwise they may be locked up to the bicycle rack in front of the school. This room will remain locked during the day, but a key may be borrowed from the office for entry.**

Reminders:

- **Parents, please bring a large plastic bag on Dec. 17th, the last day of school, to take home ALL of your child's outer wear; jackets, snow pants, rain suits, boots, etc. and bring back only necessary items in January.**
- **Parents, please bring at least one extra pair of socks and/or tights for your child to change into after playing in the snow. Snow boots are great, but don't keep the children completely dry.**

- **Reminder, again, about not “double parking” and blocking the narrow street in front of the school! Please find a parking spot when you need to leave your car and come into the school.**
- **Science Fair Date – The date for the science fair has been moved to April 13th, before spring break. The Elementary teachers will send home information at the beginning of March.**
- **The IMSP Talent Show will be Thursday, March 10th, this year. Mark your calendars! Auditions will be held February 17th and 18th.**

Don't forget to see the children's great Summer Photo Project in the first floor hallway, lunch room and primary coat room

Alice's Corner:

If you are fond of mathematics, physics and technology in particular, The Techmania Science Centre is the right place for you to visit. And if not, you can be assured that you will not be bored anyway! Techmania's expositions include interactive exhibits. Visitors may put them in motion and have a first-hand experience of the operating concept of particular physical principles and processes.

The centre is in Plzen, but it is worth travelling to see it. You can find more details here:

<http://techmania.cz/info.php?mn1=84&mn2=131&inf=mjjv>

Evenings are getting longer and you might want to escape from the Christmas rush to the theatre. Svandovo divadlo performs one of Shakespeare's classics, Much Ado About Nothing. The performance is provided with English subtitles. See more:

<http://www.svandovodivadlo.cz/index.php?lang=en&cmd=event.detail&id=1428>

For those who like active pastimes, there is the possibility of training your concentration and calmness through Archery. Fun

Island, on Cisarska louka in Prague, is the perfect place for trying. If you are not the biggest fan of Archery, you can try many other activities they have prepared for you and your children. <http://www.fun-island.cz/en/> Enjoy!

Classroom Events

Toddler News

Well, winter is coming! Getting in and out of those snowsuits, pulling on mittens and gloves and fastening big boots are all in a day's work for the Toddlers. Our community has created its own rhythm and the children are in harmony with themselves and one another in the classroom. The toddlers have enjoyed some autumn themed activities such as baking with pumpkin, cracking walnuts, painting leaf- impressions on paper and collecting leaves of all sizes and colors. In the forest we often spot red squirrels busy at work. All the trees are bare, but the leaves crunch under our feet -- now it is soggy with rain. The children were very excited about the first snow in late November.

Thank you, to all those who attended November's parent workshop on toddler independence. We look forward to seeing you on January 26th, for a review of our songs and finger plays! We wish you a wonderful holiday season, safe travels and joy in the New Year!

Primary News

Winter is here and we are ready for a nice long rest to celebrate our families, friends and the new year. We would love to thank Yulia Ferreira for showing us how to make carrot and sweet potato muffins as well as fruit smoothies and lemonade. They were enjoyed by both classes and "DELICIOUS".

In Primary we send a fine farewell to our friend Nazli who has traveled back to Turkey with her family. This month we welcome a new friend named Faiza, who has traveled with her family from Kazakhstan.

We have been practicing our songs and poems for the winter concert every day. During the week of December 6th, we will go to K.C. Zahrada to rehearse Monday and Thursday. The final performance of "Winter Joy" is Friday December 10th at 10:00 am. More information

has been sent out regarding this event and we hope to see everyone there!

Friday, December 17th, is our annual Teddy Bear Picnic! The children may arrive in pajamas and bring their favorite stuffed animal. Please bring clothing to wear outside, as well, as we may play on the playground. We will have a relaxed day and share popcorn while we listen to a few stories. Then we have special activities that we will share in the morning before leaving at 11:30. Be sure to inform your child's lead classroom teacher if you plan to leave early for the winter break.

Our study of Europe has continued by researching various countries in Europe. We have studied flags, artwork, cultures, songs and stories native to this continent. In January, we will look at Antarctica and the Arctic. If you would like to share any books, photos or information regarding these cold places, please bring them to share.

School resumes January 10th, 2011 and our first workshop of the year will be in Lower Elementary on January 19th. It is combined with the elementary workshop and will show Primary parents what they may expect in a Montessori elementary classroom, Why Montessori in the Elementary Years. Potential kindergarteners and potential 1st graders are encouraged to attend. This is often a popular workshop so be sure to sign up for childcare soon!

Have a peaceful break and lots of love to all the friends and families of Primary.

What is the light in your life?

What is the light in your life?



...And now, as we enter this season of introspection, the question of the year is, *What brings meaning and significance to your life?*

The work I do with children brings the most significance to my life...Joanna Boone

My family means the most to me... They all agreed, - Krishna, Natalie and Lukas

My Mommy is the BEST! - no hesitation from Diana

My Teddy Bear means the most to me, (but you may notice she is giggling quite a bit) -Julie Gatineau

When it comes down to the very basics of life, family is the most important thing to me. - Jana Shulmanova

Relationships bring the most significance to my life. - Martina Hraska

The best thing in my life is to see my cousins. - Michael Sta Maria

Love is what makes my life good and full. Yes, love is the answer... - Sandra Cabajova

The most special thing in my life is to see fish and sharks in the ocean...
- Riku Komiya



Primary Forest activities

Tuesday and Thursday:

I wrote in the November Newsletter that we would be going to visit another place in the forest, and so we did... We found a beautiful place for the great autumn that we had this year. It was a good place to watch and touch nature in its changing process. Children and teachers ☺ were impressed on windy days when leaves fell down like snowflakes and the many colored leaves made a wonderful environment for us to play and learn. Because we go there every week, we could also be there in rainy weather and see how leaves fall from the trees, change colors and slowly change into soil as they mix with water and mud.

Some of the children noticed and questioned about the different shapes of the leaves. So we began to play with it..☺. In both classrooms children got a piece of a tourist map with the legend explaining what everything is, such as what the specially colored lines mean for tourists. They only could get this map after they brought me 3 different kinds of leaves of different shapes. That helped them to think about different kinds of trees. I was impressed again and surprised how many kinds of trees they actually discovered around our new forest place. Wonderful! As usual, children make their own discoveries in nature.

We also made bark printing which is always a great activity and all of the children like to do it.

We are ready and looking forward to winter. When the ground is all covered with snow, our place will be different again and will we be ready for other questions, discoveries and play.

I hope we will find one more place for some winter fun for building snowmen, sliding and so on.

Thanks for your cooperation in providing nearly perfect clothing for your children. "There is no bad weather just bad clothing".

I wish you a nice advent time. ☺. Sandra Cabajova

Lower Elementary News

We have many December and January birthdays coming up! The following is a reminder of how Lower Elementary celebrates birthdays: Sometime during the day, usually in the morning, we gather for a birthday celebration. The birthday child presents to the class a lesson called „My Amazing Place in Space“. It begins by the child saying „I was born in the Universe“ and then „I was born in the galaxy called the Milky Way“. While doing this the child is using nesting boxes to represent how everything fits together in the universe. The child continues finding his or her own unique place in space by un-nesting the boxes until they end up with „me“. This lesson shows how everyone has an important place in our Universe. Afterward we all sing Happy Birthday to the child in English and in Czech!

In our classroom it is not necessary to construct a photo timeline as they did in the primary class and parents do not need to be in the classroom for the presentation.

Instead of food to celebrate, you are invited to donate a book as a permanent remembrance of your child's place in our community. A dedication to the class in the child's name will be written in the book. Some children enjoy wrapping the book and then unwrapping it in front of the class, and all the children enjoy reading them! Non-fiction books are needed in our class more than fiction.

We look forward to celebrating all of our students' birthdays!

In December we are busy preparing for our Winter Concert. Please encourage your child to practice singing the songs and poems at home to add to our practice at school.

In January our class will be exploring the beginnings of life on earth. We will look closely at the Time Line of Life, a Montessori material portraying the evolution of life on earth. Project work with this material will continue throughout the rest of the school year.

On January 19th at 3:15 pm we will have a special workshop for all kindergarten parents interested in learning more about the lower elementary class called Why Montessori for the Elementary Years. It is geared towards the kindergarten parents who are looking to enroll in the elementary class for first grade.

Upper Elementary News

Children in Upper Elementary presented a lively Mask play. *“All representatives came to Prague from different countries for the mask project and talked about their masks’ tradition and history”.*

Upper Elementary is also practicing for the winter performance. As usual, we are focusing on diversity, culture and peace. Different languages and traditions are studied for the understanding of winter celebration.

As part of our last month of year 2010 we are setting an atmosphere of ongoing research, observation of life and energy preservation. Biomes studies are still being analyzed to get a better idea of life resources. Energy from the sun, plant and animal life, water and soil create a unique environment in different planet zones. Children know what a desert, a temperate or tropical forest, or a polar zone might own respectively. Another group is studying parts of the soil and parts of the plants in a biome.

In Math, some children are working on the golden ratio (Phi) and some of the implications derived from it, like the Fibonacci concept, prime numbers, the 5 point star, and many more. We had great fun measuring our body lengths and determining the golden ratio between body lengths and dividing in decimal parts to obtain the golden ratio.

December Birthdays

Toddler	Primary	Elementary	Staff
Nobody!	Flynn Meijer Dec. 2 nd , he turns 4!	Dominik Michalek Dec. 3 rd , he turns 9!	Jana Shulmanova Dec. 8 th !
	Veronika Kreckova Dec. 14 th , she turns 5!	Keo Sket Dec. 4 th , he turns 10!	Maria Bengoechea Dec. 12 th !
	Filip Janczak Dec.20 th , he turns 6!	Julie Gatineau Dec. 5 th , she turns 8!	
	Samuel Romasko Dec. 22 nd , he turns4!	Jonas Zapletal Dec. 8 th , he turns 9!	
	Max Nesetril Dec. 28 th , he turns 7!	Natalie Vacikova Dec. 15 th , she turns 11!	
		Anna Balcarova Dec. 26 th , she turns 7!	

January Birthdays

Toddler	Primary	Elementary	Teachers
Nobody!	Aashna Ramani Jan. 8 th , she turns 6!	Adriana Frankova Jan. 15 th , she turns 7!	Mr. Trnka Jan. 3 rd !
		Ondrej Mucha Jan. 15 th , he turns 7!	Tarak Matl Jan. 12 th !
		Daniil Raskind Jan. 18 th , he turns 9!	

Enjoy the Holiday Break with a baking project...

-This recipe is from, American Children Abroad, www.ACA-Prague.com



Bake Alphabet Pretzels!

In kindergarten, it's pretty much impossible to overdo alphabet practice. After all, letters underlie all literacy tasks, whether it's reading or writing, and teachers want kids to know them automatically, without hesitation. If you're looking for more ways to explore how letters are formed, try this fun baking activity. It's hands-on, to put it mildly, and you may be surprised by how delicious the results are, too!

What You Need:

- 1 cup hot water, approximately 100°F
- 1 package active dry yeast
- 2-3/4 cups all-purpose flour
- 2 tablespoons cooking oil
- ½ teaspoon salt
- 1 tablespoon sugar

- Cookie sheet
- Coarse salt, as desired

What to Do:

1. First, have your kindergartner help you mix up the dough. Remember that just about every aspect of cooking can be valuable for academic learning. Measuring ingredients? Math and science! Following recipes? Reading! Oh, and then there's always the eating part—just plain fun.
2. To mix the dough, start by dissolving the yeast in the water. Let it sit for a few minutes until it's bubbly.
3. Add the sugar, salt, oil, and flour, and mix until stiff. Turn the dough out onto a floured surface, and invite your kindergartner to help you knead, pound, roll, and otherwise enjoy the dough to its fullest. Put it back in your bowl, and let it sit in a warm place for at least an hour, or until it has doubled in bulk.
4. Punch down the dough and divide it into 15 little pieces. Give one at a time to your child, and invite him to roll it out into a long, pliable skinny stick which he can then use to form letters. Let your child decide which letters he wants to make. An easy approach is to have him work on spelling his own name.
5. Place his completed letters on a greased cookie sheet. Allow them to sit for 30 minutes or so to rise slightly, brush them with the egg mixture, and sprinkle them with the coarse salt if desired. Bake at 400° until crispy and brown—about 12 minutes.

What's Going On?

While kindergartners benefit from writing their letters with pencils and markers, dough—like clay—offers them the extra benefit of using their full hands to feel and form letter shapes. “Alphabet Pretzels” are delectable right out of the oven, so make them often and the regular letter practice can make for delicious success for years to come.



Library

Dear Parents,

Below are some of the new books that we purchased from Scholastic!

The Geronimo Stilton series is a big hit among Lower Elementary boys so they are coming to the library very excited to borrow them! The Primary routine of going to the library is also more and more exciting every time, as children discover new books that are not yet in the classrooms.

The Kissing Hand by Audrey Penn

Chester Raccoon doesn't want to go to school--he wants to stay home with his mother. She assures him that he'll love school--with its promise of new friends, new toys, and new books. Even better, she has a special secret that's been in the family for years--the Kissing Hand. This secret, she tells him, will make school seem as cozy as home. She takes her son's hand, spreads his tiny fingers into a fan and kisses his palm--smack dab in the middle: "Chester felt his mother's kiss rush from his hand, up his arm, and into his heart." Whenever he feels lonely at school, all he has to do is press his hand to his cheek to feel the warmth of his mother's kiss. Chester is so pleased with his Kissing Hand that he--in a genuinely touching moment--gives his mom a Kissing Hand, too, to comfort her when he is away. Audrey Penn's *The Kissing Hand*, published by the Child Welfare League of America, is just the right book for any child taking that fledgling plunge into preschool--or for any youngster who is temporarily separated from home or loved ones. The rough but endearing raccoon illustrations are as satisfying and soothing for anxious children as the simple story. (Ages 5 and older)

The Karate Mouse by Geronimo Stilton

Geronimo Stilton is the editor in chief of *The Rodent's Gazette*, the most famous daily newspaper on Mouse Island, but his true passion is to write books, which become all bestsellers. He likes to read books, he likes to listen to classical music, play golf, even collect antique,

18th century cheese rinds, of all things! He adores his work and his family, but he hates to travel, because he gets airsick, seasick and carsick. Nonetheless, he often gets involved by Thea and his relatives and friends in extreme situations and adventures all around the world. In this book Geronimo Stilton gets caught up in the World Karate Championships, thanks to the efforts of Bruce Hyena and Piccolo Tao, Bruce's super-sporty cousin. Geronimo only has a week to become real champion material! Will Geronimo manage to overcome his fears in order to win the competition?

Happy Reading!