



Creating a Community



"There is nothing we like to see so much as the gleam of pleasure in a person's eye when he feels that we have sympathized with him, understood him. At these moments something fine and spiritual passes between two friends. These are the moments worth living."- Don Marquis

There was a moment last Saturday, February 7th, at Community Building Day. I had to speak at a Montessori Conference in San Jose, and at the last minute, they realized that they had shifted my time to midday instead of at the end of the conference. How in the world can I do both? I wondered. I arrived early at the Pacific school, and left just in time to make my midday speaking engagement. Sue came to my rescue, and arrived at the conference site. I spoke quickly, she jumped into my car and away we flew, using her best routes (and her GPS) to arrive in time for the mural unveiling at Pacific.

I felt rushed to arrive, and almost didn't realize that I had ten minutes to spare. I walked through, and noticed the large group of parents in the front, in the garage, on the side, in the building and on the yard. "Cindy, look - it's going to look even better - you just have to picture it!" said moms helping with the front garden. "This is going to take some time, but this is going to be a room, just like you want it, said Kristin, as she hammered away, transforming the garage into a room for the children." The official mural unveiling couldn't even happen when it needed to - there were so many more important things - just appreciating Ingrid's work, playing with children, watching parents talk, seeing people joyously taking photos. And the energy - - - the energy ---

I was standing on the deck, and I just stopped talking and listened. In that

moment, there were actually few people working. What I saw was a family - not all biologically connected, not ethnically connected, some total strangers before 10am Saturday morning. But something clicked - and there they were: moms working with babies in their front pouches. David de la Torre lining them up, snapping photos, saying, "OK - now line up according to height!" snap, snap. Children on the deck, enjoying food with their fingers, in total non-Montessori style, but experiencing total joy, people learning from other people, parents filled with paint or dirt and almost as children coming out of a sandbox - totally thrilled with their accomplishments. Even Mr. Bill, a neighbor down the street, was received and consumed as a Child Unique family member as he worked in the garden and admired Ingrid's masterpiece alongside his.

And then, we learned about the passion and thought that Ingrid put into the mural - how it encompasses all that we are, all that Alameda is, our environment, our children - integrated into one poetic artistic work of art. She was pleased - we were in awe. What a gift!

What a gift I received that day. We haven't experienced a feeling like that in a number of years. But it was recaptured, and almost palpable. I went through some of the saddest days of my life this past month, but in that moment - at that gathering, it was almost as though the rivers of life poured through my body and my spirit and gave me renewal that will hold me for some time to come.

Thank you.



Upcoming Events

- Monday, February 23: Scholastic Book Fair
- Tuesday-Friday, February 24-27: Montessori Education Week
- Tuesday, February 24: 6:15PM-8PM - Sex Parent Meeting at Encinal School
- Friday, February 27: Asia Cultural Celebration

AMS Membership Approved

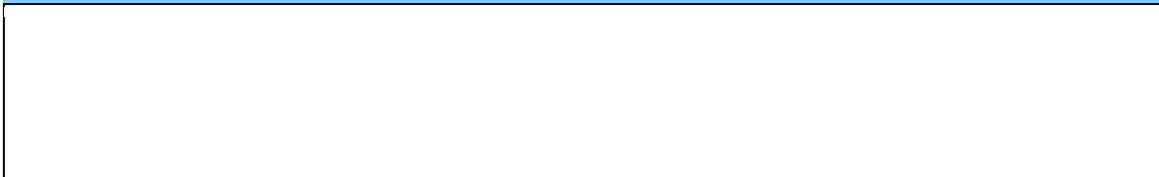


Dear Parents,

When we began in July, 1993, our school was a member of the American Montessori Society. Shortly thereafter, AMS changed their dues structure, which catapulted membership dues to \$2,000. We changed to individual AMS membership for the head of school and became members of the North American Montessori Teachers Association, The Professional Association for Childhood Education and the International Montessori Council. Cindy has continued to be a speaker for AMS, and takes a leadership role in public policy issues for the American Montessori Society.

However, this year, AMS has reverted to the previous dues structure for a limited time, and we are pleased to again be official members of the American Montessori Society.

Our acceptance letter said, "We are writing to tell you that you have been accepted for membership with the American Montessori Society. You will receive your welcome packet for this school year, which will include your 2008-09 School Certificate. We look forward to having The Child Unique Montessori School as a member and to working with you during the new school year. Welcome to the American Montessori Society!"



Special Notices:

First Aid/CPR Classes Offered:

We offer EMSA approved courses through the Community Health Education Center of Alameda in CPR and First Aid for \$90. If you would like to take these classes please let us know the best date and time for you. When we have enough people we can schedule a class at the school.

Do you have comments or suggestions for us?

E-mail your queries or ideas to "thechildunique@yahoo.org". Thank you!

Free Items/Special Information

This section is to provide free items donated to share with others, or special information which may be financially helpful. If you know of special tidbits for this section, or have new items to share with others, let us know.

Free: Womens Nike Shoes (size 8 1/2)

Children's Math Workbook (grade 4)

Older child's book: The English Roses

Two-sided 6 x 4 picture frame

Small keychain in box

Women's light brown handmade necklace (glass stones)

Thank You!

An
Easy
Way
to
Give

If you shop online, shop at eScrip Online Mall, where more than 1,000 stores donate proceeds to The Child Unique!

<http://shopping.escrip.com/cgi/shop.plx?pid=5400&s1a=5000633&sid=3491184>