



MONTECITO CONNECTION

March/April 2010



A WORD FROM ERIN Spring is a time of renewal and such an exciting time of year. Along with the beautiful dappled sunlight and spring flowers emerging, we are definitely getting enough rain lately with all these storms to help our gardens grow strong and make up for our state's water deficiency! During these rainy spring days, you may wonder what you can do with your children when it rains. Here at Montecito, if it is sprinkling, we put on our raincoats and enjoy rainy day walks around the circle and we visit the animal cages. Lately when it has been really storming and/or very cold and we are inside during the entire classroom session, we introduce more music and movement activities to allow the children opportunities to use up their excess energy. At home and at school, you can always point out, notice, and celebrate the way the rain makes everything grow - trees are flowering, plants are growing, and tiny new buds of life and new beginnings are appearing! You can also talk to your child about all of the fun activities they can participate in this spring at school (more details below). Here at Montecito, we have many events and special programs going on this spring, indoors and outdoors, so please join in the fun and exploration!

A few reminders for the coming months - Vince Tarry from iClick Smiles will be here for "photo days" on April 1st and 2nd. In addition, your child's classroom will be enjoying St Patrick's Day on March 17th and 18th, and Spring Parties on April 8th and 9th! And don't forget about our weekly classes, including Mandarin, Little Hoopers and Mini Maestros. Let's watch the blossoms and our children grow together this spring! ☺



Montecito's Nature Corner

SHARING YOUR STORIES ABOUT NATURE

"No Child Left Inside"

Take a look at nature stories around the world ...

October 12, 2009 – Excerpt from an article in ExchangeEveryDay

Jane Goodall in Greenland

Recently, I had the great pleasure of attending a lecture by Jane Goodall sponsored by the International Child Resource Institute. One point in her lecture, which as always was inspiring in many ways, especially caught my attention. She talked with great sadness about standing with kalaallit elders (the indigenous Greenland community), looking out over the landscape and seeing the barren earth that had been covered in

ice since the Ice Age. Greenland is the first place in the world where the dramatic impact of global warming is being felt. The changing environment is already threatening the existence of many species in the animal and plant kingdoms that have existed safely for centuries. And the livelihood of the kalaallit people is being threatened as well. Jane Goodall (wikipedia.org/wiki/Jane_Goodall) just celebrated her 75th birthday and yet travels around the world over 300 days a year promoting the respect for the animal kingdom, for the environment, and for peace. As we work through the World Forum Foundation to promote these same causes, we are humbled by the tireless and effective commitment of Goodall to all the inhabitants of this planet.

October 12, 2009 - Excerpt from an article in ExchangeEveryDay

Mud Day in Nepal

One of Bonnie's latest [blog](#) entries talks about Mud Day in Nepal. What happened is that at the Leadership Team meeting of the Nature Action Coalition for Children at World Forum 2009, everyone was talking about playing in the mud. Bishnu Bhatta stopped everyone cold with the sharing that in Nepal children can't get dirty because they have only one set of clothes. So Gillian McAuliffe from Australia offered that her school would raise money to send towels and soap and clothes to Nepal so there could be a Mud Day celebration. Check out the full story... complete with great photos ... on [Bonnie's Blog](#).

Earth Day 2010 is April 22nd!



TYPICAL OR TREATABLE? PARENT ED NIGHT BY CHRISTINE FOSTER – Come join teacher, parent educator and parent Christine Foster on March 10th for an informative Parent Education Night at Montecito. We are sending home information about Christine and the first of her ongoing parenting workshops that will be offered here at Montecito. You can sign up in the Office. If you need child care during the workshop, you can simply drop off your child or children in the Green Room for an enjoyable time in Afternoon Enrichment and/or Kids Klub. All drop-in programs are paid for with the Punch Card system.

SPECIAL CLASSES AT MONTECITO! If your child is not yet signed up, remember we are offering Mandarin language classes on Fridays from 12:15 to 1:00 pm, Little Hoopers for preschoolers on Wednesdays from 12:15 to 1:00 pm, and After School Sports Sampler for the older kids (K-5) on Mondays. In March, we will begin a music/movement class on Thursdays called Mini Maestros! Information and sign-ups are available in the Office and on our website. Your children always blossom and learn with all the hands-on activities provided in these varied developmental experiences! Sign-up in the Office if you would like your child to join in the fun. They are sure to have a blast!



COMMUNITY HELPERS MONTH IN MARCH: As you may already know, March is Montecito's Community Helpers Month! During this month, our children get a special visit from many of our local community helpers, including the Fire Department, a Pediatrician and a Pediatric Dentist. This year, we have added a Park Ranger from the Open Space District as well. When talking to your children about community helpers, you can tell them that they are our friends who are here to help keep us safe and healthy, and to help us when we need them. The children will even get a chance to go inside a real fire engine!



FIELD TRIPS: It's that time of year again at Montecito! We visited the De Anza Planetarium in February, and the kids had a blast! In May, we will offer a school-wide field trip to the newly re-opened Happy Hollow Zoo in San Jose. Field trips are optional, but these outings are great for children's emotional, social and physical development. Our staff enjoys these field trips with the children, and parents do not attend, so it really gives the children a sense of accomplishment and self-mastery. They are able to

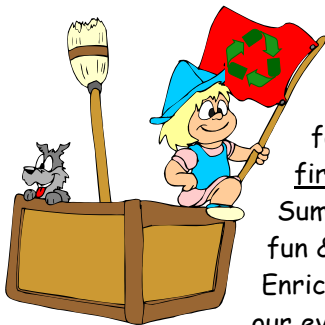
explore and discover, use their imaginations, ask questions and learn about their environment and the world around them in a safe, fun way. We have many trained staff members that come with us on the field trips, and the cost covers a fun school bus ride to and from the location, entrance and tour fees, and lunch and snacks for your child. At Happy Hollow on Friday, May 14th we will explore the new zoo & park, and learn about some of the animals and their habitats at a specially designed class for preschoolers called *Go Wild!* We will also enjoy our picnic lunch and have some play time before returning to Montecito mid-afternoon. We will send home more information and permission slips in April.



FAMILY READING CHALLENGE: We have read nearly 10,000 books, and are on our way to our goal of reading 15,000 books by June 1st. We are sure that you are reading to your children, but some parents may not be turning in reading lists. Please simply jot down the titles of the books you read and hand them to your teachers at drop off or email your list to admin@montecitopreschool.com. We need your help to meet our challenge goal and have an ice cream party for the kids.



SCHOLASTIC BOOK FAIR: The Scholastic Book Fair will be held in the Green Yard April 26th - 30th. Scholastic has a wonderful Preschool Book Fair that we're excited to bring back to Montecito. This year Teacher Laura will be heading up the Book Fair with two wonderful parent volunteers, Michele Tran and Sheela Pai. We will also be sending home volunteer requests soon - as the Book Fair is staffed entirely by parents. The Book Fair is a great way to support your teachers and your school, all while getting some great reading materials for your family!



SUMMER SCHOOL ENROLLMENT: Camp Montecito (summer school) enrollment packets were sent home last week and posted to our website. **Summer School pre-enrollment for current families began on Tuesday, March 2nd,** and new family enrollment will begin on March 23rd. Space is limited and on a first-come, first-served basis. This summer at Camp Montecito, we are offering 6 weeks of Summer School filled with school-wide themes, all of our age-appropriate classes, 6 fun & exciting summer camps (5 mornings per week), as well as our wonderful Afternoon Enrichment and Kids Klub drop-in programs. The first 2 weeks of August, we will offer our ever popular Music and Magic Camp in the morning and Holiday Care in the afternoon.

And don't forget about our family carnival event Twilight Time Carnival on July 16th! This year, we have all new carnival rides and activities for your family to enjoy. So come join in the fun at Camp Montecito! ☺

TUITION CREDITS: We still have spaces available for the 2010-2011 school year, so remember to enroll your child before we fill up and tell your friends about Montecito. If they enroll, you will receive a \$100 tuition credit for each family, and there is no limit to the number of families you can refer! We also have coupons for summer and drop-in referrals.





HOLIDAY CARE: As usual, we will be offering Holiday Care again during our April school break from April 12th through April 16th! More information will be coming home. Thank you for your ongoing support of this great program! We had lots of winter fun at our Holiday Care during the February Break. ☺

PLEASE DRIVE SLOWLY AND DON'T CHANGE LANES IN THE TRAFFIC CIRCLE

Please remember that the speed limit in the traffic circle is 4 mph.
This is a safety rule - for everyone's sake. Thank you.



LOCKDOWN DRILLS: Our Spring Lockdown Drills are just around the corner - and will be held on April 21st and 22nd. A separate flyer will be sent home in April. We at Montecito feel that by providing our students the experience of an emergency in a safe and fun way, that during a real emergency, your children will be better prepared and as a result they will not attach fear to such an experience. Our door is always open if you have any questions or concerns regarding these drills.

Please visit our website at www.montecitopreschool.com for updated calendar events and special programs!

Book Corner



Please check our website for recommended books, including some seasonal favorites.

Out of the Mouths of Babes

When brainstorming imaginative play ideas that don't involve weapons or fighting with a 4-year-old and several "no" responses from the teacher, a boy asked "Can I be a firefighter?" when the teacher said yes, that was a great idea the boy responded with glee "Great! Let's get the axe!"