

Upcoming Events

Wednesday, January 11
PTO Meeting @ 7:00pm

Monday, January 16
Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day
Yes, PVM is OPEN!

Thursday, January 26
Curriculum Night @ 7:00pm

This Month's Birthdays

Colin Geer
(6) January 20

**A Belated but
Heartfelt Thank
You...**

Ms. Christine, Ms. Esther, Ms. Marty, Ms. Vanessa, Ms. Bernadette, Mr. Daniel and I were all so touched by your thoughtful and generous Christmas gifts. From homemade crafts to gift cards, you made us feel very valued and appreciated. Personally, I went on a little shopping spree with the Amazon certificate. I purchased an Impressionist art game, many books, puzzles, classical music CDs, and several new Montessori reading materials for the classroom. But it wasn't all work and no play. I also got a great pair of shoes! Thank you for your kindness.

Dear Parents,

I postponed the distribution of this January newsletter because I anticipated a response about our charter school application. I do have an update. It's not what we wanted to hear. The Arizona State Board for Charter Schools reviewed our application and **did not** recommend a charter. This doesn't mean a charter is impossible to obtain for the 2012-2013 school year. However, it does mean it's a long shot. Immediately, Daniel and I filed to have our application presented to the full Board without the recommendation. That hearing is scheduled for February 6, 2012.

Three waves of emotion swelled inside me while I reacted to the decision. First, I felt frustration, anger, and pride. All that time, effort, money, stress- for what?! I don't like to fail at anything. I *certainly* don't like to fail *anyone*. Then, I was overcome with sorrow for the faithful folks who have been counting on this as an answer. This could have provided financial respite for so many families. Finally, I was surprised to feel relief. I suddenly felt liberated. I was finished trying to please the Board. I was finished trying to squeeze a square peg in a round hole. I was finished scheming about how I could modify a brilliant, natural, and respectful method of learning into the latest fad endorsed by the Department of Education. After two days of mulling over the news, my reasoned thought is very much in line with my instinctive reaction.

The next PTO meeting is an important one. We need to come together as a community and voice our opinions, weigh our options, and decide our fate. Alexander Hristov from Education Team Partners will join us for the meeting. He was hired by the school to lead us through the charter process. He and his wife, Elka, have 10 years of experience in writing charters and getting them accepted. He will attempt to explain what went wrong. The comments to our application reflect some unfortunate thinking. The Board does not look favorably upon small schools. The Board would be more willing to grant charters to schools that desire technology. The Board would prefer to see a jump in enrollment numbers rather than a slow and steady climb to capacity. Please plan to attend and bring your questions. This is our opportunity to evaluate the situation and make informed decisions.

Best Regards,
Ms. Eva Foster

Composer of the Month: Ludwig von Beethoven

(1770-1827) was a German composer and pianist. Beethoven's work (e.g. Symphony No. 5 in C minor) is perhaps the most recognized in classical music. Beethoven began to lose his hearing in his twenties, but continued to compose, perform, and conduct even after he was completely deaf. He remains one of the most acclaimed and influential composers of all time.

Artist of the Month: Edward Hopper (1882-1967). A personal favorite, this American painter is best known for his oil paintings, including *Early Sunday Morning* and *Nighthawks*. His spare and finely-calculated renderings reflected his vision of modern American life.

Tuition Policy- Tuition is charged based on the length of the student's daily attendance. Half-day students (8:15am-12:15pm) are assessed \$475 per month, full day students (8:30am-3:00pm) are assessed \$625 per month, and extended day students (7:30am-5:30pm) are assessed \$725 per month. Monthly tuition is based on an enrollment commitment of a full school year (46 weeks). Monthly tuition payments are due on the first school day of each month. Palm Valley Montessori School does offer a semester pre-payment discount. If families choose to pay for the full semester (February-July 2012) on or before Wednesday, February 1st, they will receive 10% off tuition.

Late Arrivals- Students are scheduled to arrive at school between the hours of 7:00am- 8:30am. Unlike some schools with one drop off and morning attendance time, this arrangement is intended to give parents more flexibility and to allow the student a more natural start to the school day. The children have the luxury of being welcomed, warming to the environment, performing serious works, and also enjoying time enough for light activities such as crafts and snack. Our academic work cycle of free choice and individual teacher-student lessons begins at 8:00am. We strive to provide the children two to two and one-half hours of concentrated work time in the morning. This time is needed to develop proper work habits, focus attention, and practice lessons. Please arrive on time. If you have a doctor's appointment or another valid reason for arriving late, let us know ahead of time with an email, phone call, or note. Entering the classroom late does a great disservice to your child and negatively affects the rhythm of those students already present and working. Any child who arrives after 9:00am is not allowed to play during recess. Because he was not present for an adequate amount of the work cycle, the child must work through his play time. I realize this policy is rather unfair to the student. He, of course, is dependent on his parents for punctual arrival. Although these students are young, we take their education and personal development very seriously and hope you will too by respecting our classroom hours.

Montessori Scholarship Organization (MSO)-

Every household that files an Arizona State Tax Return is eligible to participate in this program by directing tax money to our private Montessori school to be used for tuition assistance. This money will be vital in the 2012-2013 school year. Single taxpayers can contribute \$500 and joint taxpayers can contribute \$1,000. The MSO allows taxpayers to choose where their state tax money is spent and supports parents in choosing the type of education they desire for their children. Please see take a form (under the Community Board) or visit www.msosonline.com for more information.

PTO Corner

The next PTO meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, January 11th at 7:00pm at the school. This should be an *interesting* evening as we discuss the future of the school community. Adults only please.

Christmas Charity

Thank you for your donations to the Christmas Smiles Foundation. The coloring books, crayons, toothbrushes, toothpaste, hair bows, flashcards, socks, and other collected items were given to needy children in the Head Start program at Lattie Coor Elementary School in Avondale. The distribution event (with Santa!) made the front page of the *West Valley View*. Thank you to Suzanne McEvoy (Torin's mom) for leading the donation drive.

Winter Celebration

Amy Khan (Jadon's mom) did it again! With help from her elves (Sarah Forzetting, Margaret Moody, and Cindy Lund) in the gingerbread house construction department, Amy organized a fantastic holiday party. Thank you for pitching in sugary decorating sweets.

In the Classroom-

January is a back-to-basics month. After the holidays and Winter Break, January is a time to get back in the routine.

In the month of January, we will talk about Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and other heroes of the Civil Rights movement. We will celebrate the Chinese New Year with red lanterns, dragons, and calligraphy. We will explore the arctic regions of the earth. We will talk about cold-weather animals like penguins, polar bears, and narwhals. We will also explore the wonders of the natural world by studying hibernation and dormancy. Although it's a lovely 80 degrees in our desert, January is a time to talk about winter, snow, and ice.