

November 2018

# The Leaflette

Tree of Life Charter School

Public Montessori Education



## Attendance Matters!

by Celeste Beck, Principal

This year, Tree of Life joined a county consortium of schools to work on improving attendance and reducing chronic absenteeism and truancy. As part of our LCAP or Local Control Accountability Plan, Tree of Life has a goal of reducing its chronic absenteeism rate as a way of improving student learning. Chronic absenteeism is when a student is absent for 10% or more of the school year. Just missing 2 days a month will cause a student to fall in this category. Last year, our school's chronic absenteeism rate was 22%—that means almost a quar-

ter of our students were absent so often (and not doing independent study) that they missed 10% or more of the school year!

The data shows that it is especially detrimental for young children in kindergarten through grade 3 to miss school. Often parents think, "Oh, let's take some vacation time from school while the children are young." As it turns out, this is the worst time to take time out from school as it affects children learning foundational skills, especially reading. Students who chronically miss school at this age have a much higher percentage of

dropping out of school when they're older and having behavior and discipline issues.

Any time a student is tardy to school, it affects not only that student's learning, but the staff's workload, and sometimes the other students who are interrupted by a late student's arrival.

So, please, plan your morning routine to make sure you arrive on time. Make sure your child is at school every day. Request independent study work for days you absolutely can't make it in. And let us know if there's any way we can help make sure your child comes to school to learn and have fun!

## Parent Council News

By Michelle Maxwell, Parent Representative

We had first successful Parent Council meeting for this school year. We had a large turnout, which is very encouraging. At the meeting we were able to discuss the following topics: the calendar regarding the parent meetings for the rest of year, suggestions for parent education topics, Halloween Party plans, and upcoming fundraisers.

Our next meeting will be a Parent Education Meeting on Monday, November 5<sup>th</sup>,

5 pm to 5:30 pm optional potluck, and 5:30 pm to 6:30 pm will be the meeting. Free childcare will be provided. Please note, we will be rotating days for the four remaining meetings (Mon, Tues, Wed, Thurs) of the school year; stay tuned for dates. We also discussed suggestions for parent education topics (Shared Language of Child Development, Great Lesson, Scientific Method, Free Cheap Activities, and a possibility of having SPACE stop by for a

presentation). We were able to plan our Halloween Party and discuss Roots and Shoots.

Thank you to all the parents who came out and supported the Halloween Party event. We definitely would not have been able to pull off the event without all the donations of food, activities, and the set-up/clean-up crews. The event was a great success. We hope to see you at our next meeting. I look forward to building a great community where we learn from each other.

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## Brief Reminders:

**Nov 1—NO SCHOOL;** district in-service day for staff

**Nov 5—**Parent Council, potluck at 5, meeting at 5:30

**Nov 12—**Veterans Day observed, no school

**Nov 13—**Chipotle Fundraiser 4-8 PM

**Nov 14—**Sr. El. Turkey Trot fundraiser

**Nov 16—**Progressive Feast, noon-1:20

**Nov 19-23—**Thanksgiving Break, no school

**Nov 28—**Carnival Day, Student Council Spirit Day

**Dec 13—**Winter Party and Talent Show

**Dec 21-Jan 4—**Winter Break, no school

**MONDAYS & FRIDAYS** lunch fundraisers \$4

**WEDNESDAY—**Bank Day for Savings Bank

Help always appreciated for **Club Fridays** 1:15-2:45

# Peaceful Praying Mantis Class News

By Molly Johnson, Guide

The Peaceful Praying Mantis students had 2 wonderful fieldtrips so far. Melissa, thanks for the idea to go to the Redwood Valley Pumpkin Patch and thanks to all of the drivers who made the trip possible! We had a lot of fun at the bowling alley yesterday, with a chance to bowl and to go 'backstage' to see how the machines work to reset pins. Please call the school district (Deb Kubin) and the park department to see if we can find a new home for



the bowling alley. Without our support, the bowling alley will close permanently in December, leaving Ukiah with one less fun, family place to take our children. Originally

when we applied for the Bowling Outing we requested a price of \$7 per child. The bowling alley gave us a deal when we got there...only \$4.00 per child. If you would like your change back please send me a note in the purple folder and you will be reimbursed. If you want to donate the money to our class, we will use the \$3 to fund future outings...which brings me to the next topic.

Usually we have parent run class fundraisers to buy special supplies for class and to help children that cannot afford to go on outings. Some things we have done the past are a coffee and goodie sale before school, snow cone sale, and lunch once a week (Stacy and Tony are currently doing this to raise funds). One year parents just donated money because they didn't have time to run fund raisers. Please talk to one another to figure out what would fit your style/schedule for this year.

We need more drivers for our next outing to the Willits Museum on November 15th. Please sign up on

classroom door. We will gather at 9:15, help get children to bathroom, car seat in cars and leave by 9:45. If we arrive early, we can play at the park across the street to let the children get their wiggles out. Our tour begins at 10:30. After our tour we will return to the park for play time and lunch before heading back to TOL between noon and 12:30. The latest we will be back on campus is 1:00. Remember to send warm, comfortable clothing, an extra big lunch, water bottle, and BOOSTER/CAR SEAT!

This class should win a prize for best snacks ever! Many thanks for signing up monthly to bring sugar free snacks. We now have 21 students. Welcome to Myah and Toby. Our students are giving lessons and inviting our newest class members to their activities to make everyone feel included.

Friendly reminder about the adopt a shelf program, where we each take 1 shelf to clean EACH WEEK. The ones by north door are getting the dustiest this year. One of



the ways we can offer free Montessori school (we are one of the last ones in California) is by keeping our bills down, i.e. not having a full time janitor like other big schools. We need your help. For many years each family would take a weekend and do a deep cleaning twice a year. If it is easier for your family to come in on the weekend to clean, that too is much appreciated. (Many thanks to parents who have already donated many more hours to our school already).

Placemats, napkins, lunchboxes, indoor shoes are required in our class. Please put messy foods in sealed containers because often our children do not finish complete yo-

gurts and other messy items.

Thanks to all of you for making the International Day so fun! We had mountains of food and fantastic reports on countries around Europe!

So many of you help in so many fun ways. Did you know we have had volunteers to talk about their travels, others who teach art and woodworking, and some who read with your children? Many parents help keep our environment nice by picking up a broom, sitting with a lonely child, asking children to show them the projects they are working on, etc.

Remember, no school on November 12, Veteran's Day. Our next big school event is our PROGRESSIVE FEAST. You will receive a note requesting that you send a little money for ingredients or send in an ingredient for our dish (our class will be in charge of one course for the feast). The feast is on November 16<sup>th</sup> at noon. We could use 1 or 2 parents to help us prepare food and 1-2 to help walk children from class to class. Talk to Molly if you are available.

Go Peaceful Praying Mantis families! Remember to book your vacations after the winter concert please! We need all of you at that fun filled

## Prepared for Lunch

Each day, make sure your child helps to make their lunch and pack their lunchbox with nutritious food and eating supplies:

1. Cloth napkin and placemat
2. Eating utensils
3. Water bottle
4. Nutritious food in reusable containers that is free of refined sugar—check the ingredients label, not the nutrition facts label—do not send food with sugar, organic sugar, brown sugar, sucrose, glucose, dextrose, corn syrups
5. Reduce waste and cost by not buying individually packaged foods and juices, but buying food and juice in bulk and packing it in reusable containers

# Jr. El. 1 Golden Gecko News

By Anthony Esserman Melville, Guide

The Golden Geckoes have been busy with our research on our individual study of countries in North and South America. The middles and elders have also done some critical thinking exercises with the help of a great podcast called "Short and Curly." We listened to an episode on the extermination of 2 million feral cats in Australia and the 27 million native species of animals they kill every night. Is killing feral cats ethical? Why and why not? Some great discussion was had.

This month we will be delving into the story of writing and the story of numbers (the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> Great Lessons) as well as examining what we are thankful for and preparing for our Progressive Feast on Friday, November 16<sup>th</sup>. The students will be making something for the entire school (I am hoping we get to make corn bread this year), and I will be putting up a post on ParentSquare of the ingredients we will need donated the week before.



Our next field trip is on November 9 to the Mendocino County Museum/ Roots of Motive Power in Willits. We still need drivers. Please see the post on ParentSquare to sign up to drive. Beginning a week prior to this trip we will start examining simple machines. While we are there, we will have a simple machine scavenger hunt, as well as explore the museum and view the "Out of the Ashes" art exhibit. Lastly, please remember that there is no school on November 1<sup>st</sup>, and we have "Deep Cleaning Day" on Friday, November 2<sup>nd</sup> and then again on Friday, November 30<sup>th</sup>. We will start deep cleaning at 1:30pm and clean until 2:45pm. Please sign up at this month's ParentSquare post if you can assist in deep cleaning day. We also have our pasta fundraiser every Friday morning, and anyone that wants to come in to assist is welcome and encouraged. While cleaning up from the Halloween Party last night, I was thinking about just a year ago. I was remembering another Halloween party after the wake of the October fires. It seems like an eternity and yet only yesterday when we were out as a staff getting the evacuated people tea and coffee at the fairgrounds and making room for all the homeless animals. Rearranging the drop off routine to accommodate the fairgrounds volunteers. The many drives for donations of clothes and wares for families who were now homeless. How we morphed our Taste of the World event into a benefit for our families who lost their homes in the fires. This November I am thankful to be among others who care so much about community. Thank you for being a part of my family's life. Too often I think I take for granted all that we have here in our little school by the freeway. It is no easy work to keep a small community-oriented school alive. I am honored to be among parents who are dedicated to working together to make the best for our kids. It is a privilege to be your child's Guide, thank you for the honor. It is also a privilege to serve among staff who are so dedicated to education and working in a community-minded way. Thank you all for sharing this time, in this place, with all of us to do the best we can for our children.



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## Site Projects

Please look at the list below and see if there is a project you can help with. are welcome to come in and do these projects ANY TIME!

1. Set up new drip irrigation system so we can plant trees this fall and keep our new garden boxes watered.
2. Re-do old drip irrigation systems around Hunters Lodge building (Primary and JE1 classrooms).
3. Help Joe, our custodian, install water line to multi-purpose room, then plumb sink and water heater. I can give you his contact info. (After water line is installed, we can put in the sandbox!)
4. Prepare area for Peace Labyrinth.
5. Dump out the compost barrels so we can begin again...at least a 2 person job.
6. Check out old drip line along Sr. El. classroom, bamboo, grape vines, to big apple tree.

Always needed: weeding around pond area, weeding garden areas, pull Bermuda grass stolons and rhizomes from play structure area

**THANK YOU TO O'NEIL family for putting together the picnic tables; and to the PLANT POLICE crew who help with weeding (especially Pele, Julian, Freedom).**



## Hot Lunch Fundraisers

Support Jr. Elementary Class Fieldtrip Expenses



Burrito Mondays

Pasta Fridays



\$4

# Jr. El. 2 Mighty Meerkats News

by Stacy Strauss, Guide

So much learning goes on in our classrooms, not just memorizing multiplication facts or learning how to read and write, but all aspects of living. In Montessori classrooms, such as ours, one of our goals is to inspire the students to want to learn about something new and to produce lifelong learners. If we reach this goal, they will be able to be anything they want to be in their lifetime. The reason we learn about other cultures and people from all over the world, as for our International Day festivities, is to create an understanding of one another's perspectives. With understanding, we can create a more peaceful world. With so much hate going on in the news, this is without a doubt our most important task. Personally, I am flabbergasted that our human race hasn't evolved beyond violence fueled by hate. During World War II, Dr. Montessori was forced into exile from Italy because of her anti-fascist views and lived and worked in India. She developed her work, Education for Peace, during this time. Twice, she was nominated for a Nobel Peace prize. She dedicated her life to training teachers to create classrooms that met the needs of the child and, ultimately,



create world peace through children, who are our future. Such a daunting task, but one that is most important over memorizing the multiplication facts.

Each time there is conflict in the classroom, it is an opportunity to practice understanding of one another's feelings and point of view. When there is a conflict in the classroom, first and foremost, we identify each person's feelings. Then, why those feelings developed and, third, what each person's need is. Each person comes up with an idea of how they can make amends with the person that was hurt. Usually, both parties involved were hurt somehow. Recently, I have observed the children practicing this on their own! We have a set of cards on our peace table that have pictures of feelings and needs. They get the cards and choose their feeling and their need. It is inspirational to me to

observe such young children using these tools to develop their emotional intelligence! It is our most important task in the classroom.



Our next field trip is on November 9 to the Mendocino County Museum/Roots of Motive Power in Willits. We will be going with the Junior Elementary I class. The drivers are Sara, Shannon, Michelle, and Kyra. That will give us space for 19 students, so we need one more driver. Before we go, we will be studying simple machines. While we are there, we will have a simple machine scavenger hunt, as well as explore the museum and view the "Out of the Ashes" art exhibit. Please contact me right away if you can drive. If I don't get another driver by November 2, I will have to cancel the field trip.



Thank you to our burrito maker volunteers, classroom reading helpers, and the drivers on our last field trip to Low Gap park. I couldn't do it without you! Your volunteer work is so very important! As always, please contact me through ParentSquare if you have any questions or feedback.

## Friday Clubs

Every other Friday this year, students are participating in Clubs for the afternoon. This relaxed, fun learning time allows them to explore something that interests them and to work in multi-age groups with other staff and children that may not be part of their regular class. Each club session will be available three times during this quarter, and students will be able to change to a new club each quarter.

This quarter's clubs, held on November 30, December 14, and January 11 are as follows: Spanish

with Angela, Drawing with Stacy, Drama with Tony, Story Time with Jenn, Fiber Arts with Molly, and Coding with Veronica.

Club directors could ALWAYS use volunteer help! If you can come in to help any time on alternate Fridays between 1:15 and 2:45 PM, we would love it.

Also, if you have knowledge or expertise about a topic you think children would enjoy, you are welcome to volunteer hosting a club in the future. We will assign a staff member to work with you.

## Progressive Feast

Every Thanksgiving, the school holds a Progressive Feast right before Thanksgiving Break. Each classroom makes one course of the lunch meal, and students progress through the classrooms in four groups to have their meal together. Giving thanks is the topic of conversations, and students and staff write what they are grateful for on a leaf and tie it to the fence to share. Guides will be asking for money or ingredients to make their classroom's course, and they would appreciate help on the day of the event. Students should bring utensils, bowl, cup, and snack to school in their lunchbox that day.

# Sr. El. Random Mushrooms News

by Angela Reglin, Guide

This month has been a flurry of activity—students finished up presenting their research findings from their astronomy reports and dove head first into learning about Asian geography and culture. We are currently wrapping up Google slide presentations on countries. Some students have already begun their investigations from beginning civilizations. The younger and elder students are investigating indigenous tribes of California and the United States respectively, while the middle students are looking at civilizations in Mesopotamia. All students will be doing research and accompanying their research with cuneiform writing, basket making, or the construction of other various artifacts.

This month we had our second Great Lesson and took a deeper look at what our Earth was like during the Hadean time. Upcoming, we will be telling our 3<sup>rd</sup> Great Lesson: The Coming of Humans.

The grandiose piece of news is that of our upcoming Jog-a-thon (Turkey Trot). If you are available to come in the morning on November 14 to

help count laps, or just be an encourager, you are welcome to come. We do call it a turkey trot, so fun clothes are permitted (a fun turkey hat, headband, t-shirts with turkeys on them, etc). Please encourage your child to have fun with this event. While we are hoping you will solicit sponsors as this is the ONE fundraiser our class does to raise money for field trips and special supplies (like our new robotics kit), we are also promoting physical fitness and community building.

In November, we do have a field trip scheduled on November 13 to the Luther Burbank Center to see a show that begins at 9:30. If I do not have enough drivers as of November 3, I will have to cancel due to new policies. I understand not everyone has the flexibility to volunteer in this capacity, and if we are unable to go, I will search for local walking trips to extend the classroom learning.

Thank you very much for your continual support in working together with your child to ensure their success!

stuff, nothing seems to bring happiness or contentment. Everything is "stupid" or "boring."

When we train our kids to believe that getting stuff is the key to happiness, might we be stealing their lifelong joy and sense of fulfillment? True contentment comes from earning things rather than being showered with them.

To protect your children from this type of insidious theft:

—Next time your child wants something, ask, "How do you think you might earn that?"

—Give them some ideas about how they might earn the required cash, and give yourself a pat on the back for not giving in and buying it.

—Notice how proud they are when they earn things from good old-fashioned perspiration.

# Student Council News

By Eliza and Gideon



The International Day was fun for everybody. We had so much more

food than last year. The activities included calligraphy, dancing, games, and art.



We heard that the Halloween Party was fun. On Electronics Day, some

people brought Monopoly and other games, RC cars, and other electronic items.



In November we'll have



Carnival Day. Each class will come up with 2 carnival games to run. It will

be on Wednesday, November 28 in the morning.

The Talent Show is on December 13 at the Fine Arts Bldg. on the Fairground.



If you want to, you can put together an act to show off your talent, such as playing piano, miming, drumming, juggling, a short skit, or singing.

# Theft Alert

by Dr. Jim Fay

I know a loving mom who does just about everything to make sure her kids are happy every second of the day. If there isn't the type of food they like in the fridge, she runs to the store to buy it. Whenever the newest electronic device comes out, she makes sure they're the first to own it.

Of course, she refrains from requiring any chores out of them, because she knows they work hard at school. Besides, it upsets them when she asks them to help.

Unfortunately, and unintentionally, Mom is stealing from her children. They are two of the most miserable human beings on earth. They walk around (actually they sit around) most of the time with scowls on their faces. Because Mom has stolen their self-esteem and gotten them hooked on

## Tree of Life Charter School

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### ***Education for Life!***

Regular School Hours:  
M, T, Th, F—8:30 AM-3:15 PM  
W—8:30 AM-1:30 PM  
Before School Care 7:30-8:30 AM  
After School Care until 5:30 PM  
Student-Led Conference 2:30 PM Dismissal  
Guide-Led Conference 1:30 PM Dismissal

### **From our charter:**

“Like parents everywhere, we care about our children, want what’s best for them, and know that their experience in school can have a great impact on the quality of their life. We want them to have an education that is worthy of their beauty and potential. We want them in a place where they are known, not as faces in a crowd, but individually and personally. We want them in a school where they receive direct, high-quality attention, where their actual needs are met, where their potential is being realized.”

## **Office News**

**by Danza Davis, Business Manager**

Thank you to everyone who participated in the Equal Exchange Fundraiser! Items will be available for pickup in the office in mid-November. Our Chipotle Fundraiser will be on Tuesday, November 13; tell your cashier you are supporting Tree of Life and 33% of purchases made between 4pm and 8pm will go to the school. Raffle tickets for Roots & Shoots will go out in November to give families time to sell over the winter break; all money and remaining tickets are due to the office by March 15, 2019. Purchasers need not be present to win the raffle prizes. Mark your calendar for the event on April 6, 2019. Event tickets will go out after the winter break. Last note on fundraising: if you shop on Amazon, log on via the smile.amazon.com portal. Choose The Beginning Project dba Tree of Life Charter School for the organization you want to support. Then every time you do your Amazon online shopping, use the smile.amazon.com portal and the school will automatically get a donation from Amazon. Did you know that Amazon's founder, Jeff Bezos, attended Montessori school?

Fundraisers are an important part of keeping the school solvent and thriving, but the #1 way to support your child's education and the school is to have them here every day on time and let them stay for the duration of the school day! There has been some confusion about excusing absences

and tardies. The school must be alerted each day a student will be absent and whether it is excusable to keep accurate attendance records and follow up with truant students. Absences and tardies are only excusable for reasons indicated in the California Education Code, including illness, medical appointments, religious observation, travel hazard, or to attend the funeral of an immediate relative. Saying you excuse your student's absence does not make it excusable. Also note that any student out for 5 or more consecutive days due to illness must bring in a doctor's note to verify the illness and to alert the school to any serious communicable disease. We will be contacting parents to encourage turning in independent study to remove unexcused absences from the student records and will send truancy letters home to those who do not respond to our outreach efforts. All attendance records, including truancy letters, go in student's cumulative records.

The 2<sup>nd</sup> round of child care invoicing went out for pickup on October 22,

covering September 24<sup>th</sup>–October 19<sup>th</sup>. Please note that a negative balance indicates an amount due and a positive balance indicates a credit on your account. Invoices will reflect any credit or unpaid balance and morning and afternoon billable child care days. If this is the first time you have used child care this year, your bill will also include the one-time material fee of \$25. This material fee covers materials used in Before Care, Branches, and After Care. Child care is a service and material purchases for the program or damage to playground equipment, learning materials, books, or games must be covered to offset the cost of running the program. North Coast Opportunities offers help in paying child care bills to families with low household incomes. If you are not able to pay your bill, call an NCO office and inquire about enrolling in subsidized care through their Rural Communities Child Care Program. The most direct way to get in touch with the child care program is to call 467-3200 extension 229. Please check in with Danza if you have questions on your bill.

Stay engaged with newsletters, blackboard messages and ParentSquare posts and, as always, visit or call the office with questions/concerns. Regular office hours are 8am–4pm; phone 462-0913, fax 462-0914, email treeoflifeschool@pacific.net.

***“What is social life if not the solving of social problems, behaving properly and pursuing aims acceptable to all? [It is not] sitting side by side and hearing someone else talk...”***

—Dr. Maria Montessori