

October 2017

The Leaflette

Tree of Life Charter School

Public Montessori Education



Circle of Community and Love

by Celeste Beck, Principal

It has been so gratifying to see the support of our school community for each other. Thank you so much for those of you who helped our student who was stuck in Mexico get safely home, to those of you who have supported our family whose child passed away recently, to those of you who are supporting our family whose child is fighting

cancer.

These are the ways we model for our children that compassion, caring, and kindness are important traits to have. In a world where meanness, greed, and bullying are getting a lot of attention, let's refocus our attention on love, peace, sharing, and kindness to emphasize their value.

Include your children in discussions about how you aid others that they might not be aware of. More importantly, include them in family and community activities that help others in times of need, such as growing extra produce to give to Food Bank, helping out at Plow Shares, donating clothing to Community Center for the homeless, visiting the sick and elderly at a nursing home, helping a neighbor rake the leaves, etc. Spread the LOVE!

Parent Council News

By Jasmin Blanc, Parent Representative

Hello dear parents and happy autumn! School has only been in session for one short month and already so much has happened. First, I'd like to thank all the parents who voted for myself and Kristi Binderup as Parent Representatives. Your participation in these activities are VITAL to the success of our school, and volunteers play a tremendous role in the overall health of our school. Parent cooperation will be a consistent theme, and we encourage your support and sharing of tasks. This month's **Parent Council Meeting has been scheduled for Tuesday, October 3rd at 5:30pm.** Please be sure to attend to hear the latest updates regarding school activities and how you can help.

A big thank you to all who attended the annual Back-to-School barbecue and volunteered for the Book Fair. We continue to recruit volunteers for various events such as our 2nd annual Taste of the World fundraiser and community

event happening Saturday, October 14th at Alex Thomas Plaza. Please be sure to contribute by way of cooking a special dish on October 13th or volunteering the day of the event. Your time and energy are greatly appreciated. Another volunteering opportunity is our Halloween Party Committee. Parents are needed to help set a date and plan the party. Please read school messages for more information and respond or check in to the office to help.

October 24th marks our International Day Celebration and potluck. The potluck will take place during our lunch hour and we hope you and your families will attend and bring your favorite international dish to share.

Please note that there will be no school on Wednesday, November 1st due to a district-wide staff training.

Finally, during our informative Parent Orientations, dedicated parents recommended

some wonderful committee ideas: Site Committee is dedicated to growth and maintenance of our ever-evolving campus; Garden Committee will focus on providing an environment in which students can learn to work with teachers, parents and peers while growing plants and learning the relationship between people, plants and wildlife; FUNdraising Committee assists in the planning and coordination of special events that will bring in additional money that will help our school thrive. The money raised at last year's Roots & Shoots Fundraiser Dinner paid for our wonderful new pergola, providing shade for our young ones.

Remember, you do not need to volunteer for everything. If every parent committed to a single task, there would be beautiful growth in our classrooms as well as our campus. We hope you make the time to dedicate to our school as our dedicated guides and staff do every day to insure our children are given the best education and environment to learn in.

Inside this issue:

Primary Class News	2
Junior Elementary 1 Class News	3
Junior Elementary 2 Class News	4
Senior Elementary Class News	5
Office/Community News	6

Brief Reminders:

- Volunteers needed to help with Taste of the World event, Halloween Party, yardwork, shade structure, etc.; call school at 462-0913
- Oct 3: Board Cabinet meeting 5:30 PM
- Oct 13: Taste of the World food prep at Mendocino College 8 AM-5 PM
- Oct 14: Taste of the World event at Alex Thomas Plaza 10-2; volunteers needed!
- Oct 17-19: Student-Led Quarter Conferences; 2:30 dismissal on Tues & Thurs
- Oct 19: Parent Council, 5:30 PM, child care provided
- Oct 24: International Day celebration; potluck at noon
- Halloween Party?
- Nov 1: NO SCHOOL, staff in-service day

Primary Class Fire Cats News

By Molly Johnson, Guide

I want you to know this is the "foodies" class! Families brought in amazing snacks including fruit kabobs, sushi, homemade mac and cheese, crackers, fresh organic fruit, and organic popsicles too! Thank you for bringing a smile to the children's faces and tummies! There will be a new snack list on the door because we have depleted our culinary delights!



We have been learning about our universe, our planet, and our community. Speaking of community, a big thanks to all of the families that took time to drive, coordinate, and chaperone on our last outing to Redwood Valley. We were able to tour the store, the post office, and the fire department. The folks at the store were so generous! They gave us fresh fruit and waters to drink. Please stop by their store to pick up some groceries! The post office gave each student a behind the scenes tour and a coloring book, and the fire department not only informed us about the purpose of each truck, but also let each student spray the big fire hose!

This month's outings: Check our door for the next field trip sign ups! We need drivers for the Pumpkin patch on Friday 13th. Drivers gather at 10 and we stay for lunch. We also need drivers for the Library on Thursday 26. We are leaving right after lunch and should be back before 2:00!



We, the teachers, only have so much time in a day. We can spend it writing reminders home or we can spend it teaching your child about reading or food preparation or about parts of leaves. We have 21 darling children this year. Please help us by doing those perhaps mundane, but oh, so helpful things every day so we can keep our program strong. Please always send 2 cloth items at lunch...one for table, one for napkin. Please make sure your child has a change of clothes, even if it seems silly. Please always send purple folder back to school after signing it. Please send all paperwork back filled out if it is in the return to school side. Please always send the little books your child is (or will be) bringing home, back to school in the ziplock, in the purple folder. The idea of all of this minutia is to help your child become organized, and create habits that will serve her/him for life. Maria Montessori believed that children were attuned to detail and that we could assist them to prepare for their adult lives by providing a nicely organized system. She wrote that school and home should work together to support children.

The BBQ was a hit! Thanks to all who attended and shared that wonderful time and fabulous dishes with us. Thanks to all who were able to attend our World Peace celebration at school.

October is one of my favorite months. It is packed with exciting events including Taste of the World and our International Day! This year our class will be studying Oceania. I will be sending a report form home soon with your children so they can research a country of their choice from that area. Please take the time to assist your children with this work as they feel REALLY proud to share it with our class. This is one of the projects that makes our school really special because it develops world awareness from a young age. We have a friend coming in to talk about the Philippines. PLEASE bring photos or stories of

your experiences, share your knowledge with our class if you have visited any of the countries in Oceania!

Thank you for all of the work you have done to make these wonderful children! It is a joy to work with them! David and I were talking about our careers and how much we love waking up in the morning to go to this job. Come visit and join the fun!



Attendance Matters

Data shows that students who miss more school than their peers have a greater chance of doing poorly academically and socially and of dropping out of school! At Tree of Life, they miss important lessons, social emotional learning activities, and access to Montessori resources. Being even 5-10 minutes tardy, means your student misses Move This World activities that are a really important part of helping students to communicate, understand, and support each other!

In addition, each day a student misses school, the school loses \$57.75 of its funding. When a student does Independent Study work while absent, the school recoups \$53.50 of that lost funding...so thank you to everyone who has chosen to do that and has turned in their work packets!

Perfect attendance was pretty low this past month...we can do better...please help us out:

September Perfect Attendance

Fire Cats Class: 48%

Kung Fu Chickens Class: 40%

Imagine Dragons Class: 25%

Fox Pack Class: 24%

Jr. Elementary 1 Fox Pack News

By Anthony Esserman Melville, Guide

The Fox Pack has been busy learning how to operate in the classroom. We have also been studying about the First and Second Great Lessons: The Story of the Beginning of the Universe and the Earth, and the Story of Life. We will be spending a great deal of time this year on the story of life. This is due to our 3 year cycle of focus.

Research projects on dinosaurs or an extinct animal will be coming up in early October. After that each student will be researching a country from Africa for our International Day celebration at the end of the month. Speaking of the end of the month, don't forget that this is when our first conferences of the year will be. It is vital that your child attend these conferences as they will be guiding them.



Our fieldtrip to the Heirloom Festival with the Kung Fu Chickens was wonderful. The students seemed

to enjoy seeing all the variety of melons, squash, and livestock, as well as experience all the small workshops. There were wheat shafting and sack races, melon tasting and cob house exploring, chicken viewing and seed sorting. My favorite part of the day was hunting down the Crane melons that are named after our own Anson Crane's family. His great grandfather developed the Crane melon in Rohnert Park.

Our trip to the Frey Vineyards was also inspiring. Grape picking, washing feet, and stomping on grapes to make grape juice were amazing. The children had a blast. And then



we got a chance to visit the livestock of the farm. Thank you to the Frey family for the invitation.

Our next fieldtrip is to visit 2 farms in Boonville with the Kung Fu Chickens. Please read Stacy's Kung Fu Chickens article about the fieldtrip for details. We need drivers, so please text me if you can drive. After this, the following fieldtrip will be to see The Scientific Circus on November 7th at 9:30 in the morning. We will be arriving to school at 8:00am and leaving the school promptly at 8:15am. If you are late to school this day, your child will likely be spending the morning in the Primary or Sr. El. Classroom. We will be returning by 12 noon.

International Day

Take a quick tour of the world on International Day on October 24th at Tree of Life! Each classroom chooses a continent focus, and students in that class research different countries, cultures, foods, games, dances, art, music, etc. from that continent. Students share their research, come to school dressed in cultural clothing, and get to visit the continental displays in the other classrooms. At noon, we have a big potluck lunch with international foods prepared at home and brought to school.

For the potluck, each family prepares an international dish and either brings it to serve before lunch (noon) or brings it in the morning and puts it in an ice chest at school until serving time. PLEASE label your dishes with name of the food, country or culture it is from, and your family name.

We need volunteers to come at 11 AM to set up and heat food, if needed. Parents are welcome to join us at noon for lunch! We also need clean up volunteers too. Thank you!

Lunch Practical Life

As a Montessori school, part of our curriculum is Practical Life, and one of the things our students practice is meal time etiquette. For this reason, we eat together as a community, we set our place, we practice polite conversation and manners, and we clean up after we eat.

When we set our place, we put out a placemat, napkin, food containers, utensils, beverage. **You can help us by making sure your child has a placemat and napkin OR 2 napkins in his/her lunch bag, has packed a healthy lunch with no refined sugars, and has that lunch in reusable containers in a reusable lunch bag/box.**

Please follow this up at home by eating as a family, staying seated during the meal, and practicing polite conversation during meals.

Label Clothing and Water Bottles

Did you know that your brain gets dehydrated before other parts of your body? When children don't drink enough water, they tend to lose concentration easier and act out more. Children also seem to easily lose their water bottles, so please label them with the child's name so we can return water bottles found on the playground to their owners.

Also please label any clothing or hats that children wear to school. They tend to drop them on the playground and not claim them. If they are not labeled, we cannot return them. With the chillier days, remind your child to wear a sweater or jacket and to bring it home each day. Teach them what to do when they take off their jackets, how to hang them up, how to take care of their clothing. It takes a lot of resources and labor to make clothing, so maybe read or tell a story about how clothing is made.

At the end of each month, we take all the unclaimed lost items to a charitable organization.

Jr. Elementary 2 Kung Fu Chickens News

by Stacy Strauss Guide

Maria Montessori was nominated several times for a Nobel Peace Prize for her work with children as a way towards world peace. She lived through both World Wars and realized that, to prevent another World War, we needed to raise future generations that understood and valued each other's ideas, cultures, and were kind to each other. After celebrating the International Day of Peace on September 21, I decided to have a focal point on kindness in the classroom. We are practicing random acts of kindness, then acknowledging them at the end of the day. You can support your child at school by asking them what acts of kindness they saw or did that day. You can also talk to them about what kind act they could do for someone that they wronged.

We had two successful field trips in October. The Heirloom Expo was an interesting, free event



in Santa Rosa. Thank you to our drivers for making it possible for us to experience the heirloom fruits, vegetables, and animals! They got to taste, pet, and climb! Thank you to Frey Vineyards (Julian's family) for inviting us to experience a little of what grape harvest was like before machines.



Our next field trips are:

—10/10: The Apple Farm and Penny Royal farm in Boonville 8:30-2:30

Please bring a lunch, hat, water bottle, and good walking shoes.

—11/7 morning: Luther Burbank Center: Scientific Circus

Pancake Fridays

I would like to expand our Pancake Fridays so that it can be a fundraiser as well. If you are available on Friday mornings before school to help make and serve a pancake breakfast to families of Tree of Life students, please let me know. Our "restaurant" would be open from 7:30-8:30 one Friday per month. The money will go into our field trip fund with a percentage to be donated to victims of the recent hurricanes.

Scarecrow

Thank you, Cat (Lila M's mom), for volunteering to help make and transport our class's scarecrow to the Pumpkinfest during the week-end of October 21st. We are going with the pirate theme of the Pumpkinfest and dressing our scarecrow like a pirate with a cannon. Some of the students are volunteering to bring items for it. I will let you know in their purple folders if they need to bring something for it. It will be displayed at the Pumpkinfest, so be sure to go see it!



Volunteers Needed

Please see the sign up sheets in the office or respond to the phone calls and emails for help that have been sent out.

Taste of the World Event: Oct 13th at Mendo College, help prepare foods for sale at the event...we can use the college commercial kitchen from 8 AM to 5 PM that day to make and store food; Oct 14th work at the event setting up booths, decorating, doing a craft activity, serving food, taking money, cleaning up. The event is from 10 AM to 2 PM. Do you know someone who might like to perform, teach a skill or game, etc.? This was a really fun event last year.

Shade over Play Structure: We need some people to erect the new poles, use a rented auger, help with a crane. Mark and Ian need more people to help. Please call the office.

Children's Gardens, Labyrinth Area: A few of us got a lot of work done clearing the labyrinth area, but there is still a little more to go. Before we install our new drip irrigation donated by Drip Works, we will need our garden boxes completely cleaned out, double lined with weedcloth, and filled with new soil. Can you help us with the first step of weeding and cleaning out the boxes? Please contact Celeste ASAP.

Conversations with Your Child

Make it a point to spend some quality time in conversation with your child each day. Here are some sample conversation starters for connecting with your child at the end of a school day:

- Tell me about the best part of your day.
- What gave you a challenge today?
- What's the biggest difference between this year and last year?
- What's the best thing about recess?
- What were most students doing at recess?
- Can you show or tell me about something that you learned today?
- What was your favorite reading today? Did it remind you of anything?
- Tell me about something that made you laugh today.
- Ask open-ended questions.

Sr. Elementary Imagine Dragons News

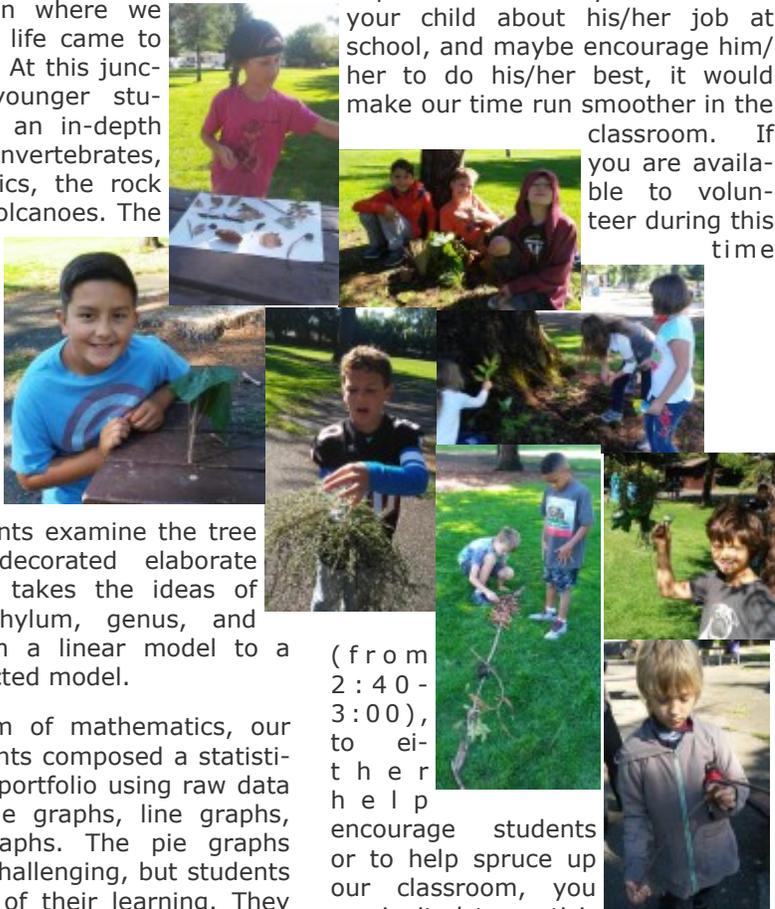
by Angela Reglin, Guide

We are well on our path of learning, discovering, and exploring. We celebrated International Peace Day by singing "This is my Wish" by Kevin Ross. Peace is the heart of our school and the motivation for how we interact with one another. Maria Montessori said, "Peace is what every human being is craving for, and it can be brought about by humanity through the child."

We are coming out of the depths of space and into the light of life. Upcoming in the very near future, we will begin exploring our Second Great Lesson where we look at how life came to be on earth. At this juncture, the younger students begin an in-depth study on invertebrates, plate tectonics, the rock cycle, and volcanoes. The middle students explore parts of a cell in plants and animals and go into the biology of the human body. The eldest students examine the tree of life—a decorated elaborate work which takes the ideas of kingdom, phylum, genus, and species from a linear model to a more connected model.

In the realm of mathematics, our eldest students composed a statistical analysis portfolio using raw data to create pie graphs, line graphs, and bar graphs. The pie graphs were quite challenging, but students were proud of their learning. They are in the process of calculating range, median, mean, and mode. The youngest students are exploring common multiples in a variety of ways and moving into Number theory with determining divisibility by a number. Our middle students are learning about positive and negative numbers.

The Imagine Dragons are slowly meshing and becoming a learning community. Many have extended several gestures of kindness, empathy, and a general sense of caring for the members of their classroom. I still find that several students are needing specific lessons on how to clean-up from washing out a paint brush properly to sweeping the tile floor. Thank you to our September families who have come to do a deep cleaning of our classroom. Nonetheless, our job time at school (a practical life activity) is a really important time. If you could ask your child about his/her job at school, and maybe encourage him/her to do his/her best, it would make our time run smoother in the classroom. If you are available to volunteer during this time



(from 2:40-3:00), to either help encourage students or to help spruce up our classroom, you are invited to participate in the fun. Often, if we are late at dismissal, it is because several students chose not to participate whole heartedly during the allotted cleaning time, so it is taking longer to complete jobs.

"It follows that the child can only develop fully by means of experience on his environment. We call such experience "work"." —Dr. Maria Montessori

Student Council News and Events

By Jade and Jamison

Water Day was a good spirit day. There was all this water stuff, like water squirters, sprinklers, and water balloons. The sprinklers were really fun, and there was a water balloon toss. The bubbles were really fun and we liked popping them. Everyone seemed to have a lot of fun getting wet.



Our spirit day for October will be Paper Airplane Day. (If it rains, it will change to a movie day.) People will make paper airplanes in classrooms and then go outside to fly them. There might be experiments to see how far a plane can fly, how high it can fly, or how far it can fly. It will be on Friday, October 20th in the morning before recess. That way people can keep playing with the airplanes at recess if they want to.



It was fun singing songs at Peace Day. It was fun working in the garden also.



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

Greetings from the office! I hope you are enjoying the change in seasons and new routines they bring.

There is a lot of independent study out there. Thank you for taking the time to request and pick up your packets. I know it is a lot of work to get them finished, but it is important to keep students up to date, minimize absences, and keep the school funded for unattended days. We are grateful for those who have completed their packets and turned them in. Please don't let it stop you from bringing the packets to school if they are unfinished; it is valuable for Guides to see where students are struggling and Sara is also available to assist during tutoring on Wednesdays from 1:30 to 2:30. Let us know as soon as possible when you need independent study. If it is only for one day, prepped packets requested in the morning can be made available before the end of the school day. If it is for longer periods of time, then please give us advance notice so that Guides have a chance to include current classroom work.

Please be sure to check in at office when students are arriving to campus late or leaving early. Even if you have called ahead, it is important that you sign your student in be-

cause the physical sign in sheets are used to correct the classroom attendance sheets; for instance to excuse a tardy when applicable or change an absence to a tardy when a student is late and attendance has already been turned in.

For those with students in child care, invoices were handed out at the end of the month covering August and the first three weeks of September. Once the office has prepared them, the protocol for invoicing is that childcare staff hand them out as students are dropped off and picked up. Any invoices that do not get picked up in person are mailed. The invoices include any deposit that was made, current registration fees, billable childcare days, and any outstanding debt from last year. Students arriving before 8:15 in the morning or staying after 3:30 in the afternoon are considered to be in childcare. Pay schedules are posted in the office and copies available.

Lastly, but very importantly, there are still outstanding forms from registration packets! Please help us meet our reporting requirements by turning in these documents, they are critical to the operations of our campus. Some missing items that were sent home have already been turned in, thank you and keep them coming!

Fall Recipes

by Celeste Beck, Principal

Harvest Moon will shine this month on October 5th, and autumn brings us winter squashes, pumpkins, carrots, beets, and sweet potatoes all loaded with vitamin A to help our eyes see better during these days of more darkness. You could:

1. Cut them into cubes and roast them with herbs and garlic in the oven on a non-stick tray or parchment paper at 375 degrees
2. Steam them, and then puree in a food processor, add some cinnamon, nutmeg, or other spices
3. Blend garbanzo beans and steamed root veggies or squash in food processor with some lemon juice and tahini for a fall hummus variation
4. Make a fall harvest soup with onion, garlic, kidney or other beans, corn, carrots, and squash; season with thyme, parsley, savory
5. Sweet Beet Carrot bars: combine 1 C whole wheat flour, 1 C oat flour, 1 T baking soda, 1 C chopped dates, 1 chopped apple, 1 banana mashed, 1 C chopped pineapple, 1 C raw beet shredded, 1 large carrot shredded, 1 C chopped walnuts, 1/2 C dried currants, 1 tsp vanilla. Spread in lightly oiled 9X9 pan. Bake 350 degrees for 40 min or until toothpick comes out clean. Cool, cut into bars, and enjoy!

2017

October

Tree of Life

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
01	02	03 Board Cabinet Meeting 5:30	04 Bank Day	05	06	07
08	09	10	11 Bank Day	12	13 Taste of the World food prep, Mendo College 8-5	14 Taste of the World Event, Alex Thomas Plaza 10-2
15	16	17 Student-Led Conferences, 2:30 dismissal	18 Student-Led Conferences, 1:30 dismissal Bank Day	19 Student-Led Conferences, 2:30 dismissal	20	21
22	23	24 International Day, potluck at noon	25 Bank Day	26	27	28
29	30	31	01 NO SCHOOL, staff in-service day	02	03	04
05	06	Notes:				