



**DECEMBER 2011**

Crystal Lake Montessori School  
Telephone: 815-338-0013  
Email: clms13@clms.org  
www.clms.org

## Events

**Scholastic Book Fair-Buy One Get One Free**  
Sponsored by the Parent Group  
Monday, Dec. 5 -Friday a.m., Dec. 9, 2011

**Parent Group Meeting**  
Wednesday, December 7, 2011 at 7: 00 p.m.

**In-line Skating for Elementary & Middle School**  
The week of December 12-16, 2011

**Market Day Pick-Up**  
Wednesday, December 14, 2011  
10:30-11:30 a.m.

**Winter Break Begins - No School**  
Monday, December 19, 2011

**Staff In-Service- No School**  
Monday, January 2, 2012

**School Resumes**  
Tuesday, January 3, 2012

**Parent Group Meeting**  
Tuesday, January 10, 2012 at 8:45 a.m.

**Auction/Dinner Dance**  
Saturday, March 3, 2012

## Features

Classroom News  
Parent Group News  
Market Day News  
UNICEF Donation  
CLMS Food Drive  
Winter Traffic Alert  
SchoolReach

Dear Parents,

We would like to thank all of the parents, teachers and students that volunteered to make our Thanksgiving celebrations successful.

We hope all of you had a peaceful Thanksgiving. It is a special time of year to reflect on being grateful. We want all of our families to know how thankful we are to have you at Crystal Lake Montessori School. We can provide a building and talented, dedicated teachers, but it doesn't become a school until each child arrives each day. The joy and excitement that we see each day in the children's faces makes this more than just a school.



As always, we try to keep school calm and peaceful during the month of December. There is often so much going on at home and in the commercial world during this time of year. It is nice for the children to be able to have a productive and calm school environment. Out of respect for the religious and cultural diversity represented within our community, we do not celebrate any religious holidays at school. Enjoy the winter break and any holiday you may be celebrating during our winter break, December 19-January 2.

We would like to wish you and your family a very happy, healthy and extraordinary new year.

January 2012 brings us to re-enrollment time for the 2012-2013 school year. We will have the enrollment information and forms ready for re-enrollment beginning Tuesday, January 17<sup>th</sup> and open enrollment for new families will begin on Wednesday, February 1<sup>st</sup>. If you have any questions about enrollment, placement, philosophy, curriculum etc. please stop in, call, or send an e-mail, we love talking about Montessori education, Crystal Lake Montessori and your children.

*"Research has found that Montessori students enjoy social, emotional, and academic benefits from their education. From demonstrating greater responsibility to a deep enthusiasm for learning, as well as increased abilities to adjust to new situations and utilize life skills, Montessori children appear to be more well-rounded than their traditional school counterparts." **Public School Review***

***"The gift of a Montessori education will last a lifetime."***

Peace, Ms. Pam

## Parent/Infant/Child Program

Our class is growing friendships as well as developing social skills. It is amazing to witness the growth that is taking place in this environment.



Routines provide a feeling of comfort and assurance to our young ones. As we move into winter break, let us consider how changes in routine will affect them. The busy weeks to come will require our patience and understanding.

## Toddler (2-3 Year old) Program

Why are your children putting their coats to the floor when it's time to go somewhere? They must have picked up that habit at school! Well, they sure have.



Here is a simple attempt to foster a bit of independence. The jacket flip: 1. "Put your jacket on its back." (place coat onto the floor spreading jacket so the armholes are visible) 2. "Toes by the tag." (the child walks around the coat) 3. "Put your hands into the holes." (Place both hands well into the armholes at the same time) (Initial attempts may require

adult to lift coat up off the floor from underneath it while assisting arms into holes and guiding thru the next step) 4. "Up and over rollercoaster." (both arms come up and over) 5. "Push!" (As arms round the down movement the child pushes both arms straight out from the side of their body) Sometimes our hood actually stays on our head in the process! Success!

Allow ample time for these little ones to achieve this (step by step). Soon we will be adding snow pants, coats, boots, hats, and gloves (in that order) so we can continue our outdoor time. Remember to send these items with your child. Enjoy your holiday break and see you in January!



The Toddler Team



## Early Childhood Program

It's hard to believe it is December already. We would like to thank all the families who helped and contributed to our wonderful feast. It's always so special to share our delicious feast together with all early childhood classes, as a community.

December will be a busy month. The children will be studying the Arctic and Antarctica. They will be learning about animals in the winter as well as transportation by land, air and water. Our author of the month is Donald Crews, who writes about all types of transportation.



Mother Nature has reminded us that cold weather is



coming and we need to have our children ready for it. Please remember to send snow pants, a warm jacket, mittens/gloves, hat and boots everyday with your child. We do go outside if the

temperature is 15 degrees or warmer, including the wind chill factor. Children who wear boots to school should bring a pair of shoes or slippers to change into for the classroom.

Please keep in mind winter break is from December 17<sup>th</sup> thru January 2<sup>nd</sup>, with students returning on Tuesday, January 3<sup>rd</sup>.

We wish you all a wonderful and safe winter break and we look forward to seeing you again in the New Year!



## Kindergarten Extension Class

At a time when we are thinking about thanksgiving, I would like to take the time to say how grateful and thankful I am to have your child in my class. Every day is full of joy, sharing, and an excitement for learning.

We enjoyed being invited to the big feast with the Elementary and Middle School students. We made all of the apple sauce for the event. It was a lot of apple sauce!



The month of November was very busy, and the time seems to have passed so quickly. We reviewed and practiced manners, had fun with our author of the month Jan Brett, completed research and science experiments, and lots of math and language.

The month of December will pass by even more quickly because we will only have three weeks before winter break. We go to the school library every Wednesday. Please try to set up a routine to assist your child to remember his/her library book every Wednesday. They are getting to an age when they want to be very independent, and, therefore, it is important to have age appropriate responsibility.

We will talk about winter, do more research, continue our math and language skills (this includes writing skills), and follow each child's interest and ideas.

## Lower Elementary Program

We would like to start by again thanking all of our parent and student volunteers that donated, set-up, served, and cleaned up for our Thanksgiving feast. It is because of your support that this meal, which is so important to the togetherness of our community, was successful.



Winter has arrived at CLMS. In order to continue to enjoy the outdoors we need your help. Your child needs to have a warm hat, coat, mittens, snow pants, boots and scarf each day. Many children bring a separate bag to keep at school for some of these items during the cold season. If the temperature is 5 degrees Fahrenheit (including wind chill) or above we will venture outside. Being outdoors is so important to the Montessori curriculum. Thank you for your support.

The Lower Elementary team would like to wish your family a peaceful, prosperous, and healthy New Year!

## Upper Elementary Program

It is really hard to believe that our school year is almost half over as we look towards the approaching Winter Break. Highlights from the past month include:

- Our celebration of friendship and gratitude on the day of the Thanksgiving Feast
- Collection of close to 400 pounds of food delivered to the Crystal Lake Food Pantry by our sixth-level students
- Inspirational Ancient Civilization research reports, projects, and presentations -- the first group projects of the year -- in both classrooms (Students also shared their visual aid projects with the other classroom.)
- An in-depth geography study of Asia, including detailed maps and fact-finding questions (concluding in December)

Prairieview Nature Center



We hope your children have shared these highlights with you. Ask them about these activities, if they have not discussed their participation. These are just a few examples of opportunities for our

students to grow and learn from each other. Upper Elementary is the start of the social age for children. Friends become very important and working with friends is the highlight of many students' days. It takes time to develop the social skills needed to work successfully with others, just as it takes time to find a balance of work and social time. Our classrooms provide an environment rich for learning and students can learn a lot from their friends, but they still need teacher direction and parent guidance to help them learn how to make appropriate choices. Please talk with your child about their progress and what steps they need to take to complete their goals.

This month Upper Elementary students will continue their Asia study and work together on a puzzle map collage. If time permits, we will start a similar geography study of Oceania and Australia that will continue into January. Botany, Zoology, and Science studies will also move into full swing this month. Our next book report, a biography or autobiography is due January 3<sup>rd</sup>.

Just an early reminder to sixth-level students, the Sixth Level Project outline is due January 13<sup>th</sup>.

We wish everyone a safe and enjoyable winter break.

## Middle School

We have had a busy month. After we returned from our exciting trip to Sound to Sea in North Carolina, it was time to prepare for **Middle School Information Night**.

The student presentations were interesting and informative. Our graduates did a great job informing every one of their wonderful transitions to high school.



this event!

All Middle School students presented his/her Independent Study on Tuesday, November 29. There were a wide range of topics including cooking, painting, construction, sewing, and interior



design. This is a three month project completed with parental assistance after it has been approved by parents and teachers.



On Monday, December 5, our class will depart for Nature's Classroom in Mukwonago, Wisconsin. The students will be completing outdoor and indoor projects. Our class will also be working and socializing with Middle School students from Rogers Park and Brickton Montessori. Both are in Chicago.

After we return, we will have a week to finish up **Cycle 3** entitled **Power**. That involves personal power about Human Rights. Some of the subjects are women's suffrage, immigration, and school segregation/integration to name a few of the topics.

**Enjoy your Winter Break**

## Parent Group News

Greetings parents!

We hope you all had a nice Thanksgiving! The month of November reminds us to be thankful for our families, our friends and all that we have. The CLMS Parent Group wants you to know how thankful we are for all of you! We would like to thank you for all of your support so far this year. Whether you have helped out by volunteering, attending one of our events or supporting one of our fundraisers, please know that it is greatly appreciated.

Here is a recap of what your CLMS PG has been working on in the month of November:

**New Refrigerator – PG/Community Room** – A big thank you to **Julie Durrant and Serena Giussani** for renewing and refreshing the kitchen area of the PG/Community Room. The PG used funds at the end of last year to purchase new dishes, glassware, coffee and tea makers and various other kitchen items as well as buying a new refrigerator. Thank you to Julie and her husband Richard for delivering the new refrigerator. Please feel free to use this area whenever you are around school. It is there for your use.

**Innisbrook – Jenni Wingate & Art to Remember - Patty Meier/Beth Rank**

All of the Innisbrook and Art to Remember orders have been distributed. We appreciate all of your orders and hope you are happy with your items. Thank you to Jenni Wingate for organizing this year's Innisbrook fundraiser. A big thank you to Jennifer Morales for organizing the orders and distributing them to the classrooms. Thank you to Patty Meier for all of your years of service running the Art to Remember program. We appreciate your hard work and dedication to the program and for supporting our children's love of art!

**Small Hands – Teresa Melton**

The Small Hands orders have arrived and are available for pick up at the front desk. Thank you to Teresa Melton for organizing and promoting this program as well as placing all of the orders. We also want to thank Teresa and her volunteers for getting the orders ready for pick up. Thank you to all of you who supported this fundraiser with your personal orders as well as orders for items from our teachers' giving trees. We are happy to share that ALL of the items from the teachers' giving trees were fulfilled through a combination of your generosity and Parent Group funds. Over \$500 in gift certificates were raised for more classroom works as well!

**CLMS Day at Panera Bread** – Thank you to all of you who supported the CLMS PG Day at Panera Bread. It was nice going to Panera and seeing friendly CLMS faces as well. We were able to raise \$36.20 which will be used toward a PG sponsored all-school assembly. Stay tuned for details in the new year.

**BOGO Book Fair – Kristin Carpenter & her LOYAL cast of volunteers**

Thank you to Kristin Carpenter and her LOYAL cast of volunteers who set up the book fair in record time! They are ready for you to join us at one of our more popular events at CLMS...the Buy One Get One FREE book fair. Please join us in the parent/community room the week of December 5<sup>th</sup> – 9<sup>th</sup> and stock up on your favorite books to give as gifts this holiday season or to read over winter break.

**Upcoming PG sponsored activities:**

**Spirit Wear – Alicia Slavin**

Stay tuned for information regarding our CLMS spirit wear. Show your school spirit by purchasing your CLMS t-shirts, sweatshirts, sweatpants, hats, scarves, tote bags as well as other items. Look for information and order forms in your child's weekly folder.

### **Gourmet Gorilla – Jennifer Morales**

Are you interested in a nutritious, organic hot lunch program? We are working on getting a program in place for the new year through which parents can order hot lunches for their children at CLMS. Information is on the way, feel free to check out [gourmetgorilla.com](http://gourmetgorilla.com) for more details.

**The PG is a wonderful way to meet other parents** and stay connected with the various activities we sponsor. From social, to service, to fundraising there is an activity that hopefully speaks to you in some way. Please come and see what we are all about. We would love to have your new ideas and fresh outlook on things.

Please feel free to let us know if you have any ideas or things you would like to see us do in 2012. We welcome your input. You can email us at [clmsparentgroup@gmail.com](mailto:clmsparentgroup@gmail.com) or join us on Facebook.

**If you are looking for something new to try in 2012, why not consider joining us for a PG meeting?** We are a fun group of parents who are all interested supporting CLMS and our children's education and daily experiences.

**We wish you a happy holiday season and a wonderful new year! Enjoy your winter break!**

Jennifer Emmert

### **Market Day News**

Hi Everyone! A special thanks to our volunteers who help out each month, with an extra thank you to those who keep coming back to every sale! You are the best! We raised \$116.62 last month for a total of \$339.27 this school year.

Next Sale Date: Wednesday, December 14, 2011

Thank you, Lisa

### **UNICEF Donations**

Thank you for participating in the CLMS UNICEF collection campaign at Halloween time. Our little orange boxes were filled with almost \$200.00 in coins and care. We mailed a check to UNICEF that will be used to help children in our country and all around the world.

### **CLMS Food Drive**

Sometimes you CAN measure the generosity of our CLMS community! On November 21 and November 28, Ms. Kristin and our sixth level students delivered food and paper products donated by our CLMS families and staff to the Crystal Lake Food Pantry.



Local residents in need are able to utilize the Crystal Lake Food Pantry for needed food and supplies. Thank you again for your generosity!

### **Winter Traffic Alert!!!**

We now have our own snow plow truck so "Let it snow." It is beautiful to look at; fun to play with; and sometimes dangerous to drive in. Snowy conditions make stopping very difficult and most drivers are not expecting a stopped vehicle on Country Club Rd. If you are approaching the school, please slow down and signal your intentions well in advance of your turn. If there isn't space to pull your whole vehicle off the road, please drive past our driveway and try again in a few minutes. Also, if it snows a lot and we do not get timely melting, we will have to pile the snow quite high on the parking lot edges, and your ability to see small people may be hampered. This also requires increased attention to where your children are when you are walking them into or out of the building.

If we do get timely melting, we may have a morning problem of frozen puddles. Please be aware of stopping distances in the lot; even at slow speeds it may be increased.

We thank you for your patience and attention to details during your time in the school parking lot especially in the winter months. Mr. Jerry works very diligently to make it clear of winter hazards, however we all know there are some days when Mother Nature gets ahead of us for a few hours. Thank you.



### **Save The Date!**

You will want to be there!

**March 3, 2012**

**"It's a Tailgate"  
Auction/Dinner Dance at the  
Bull Valley Golf Club**

# SchoolReach

## Crystal Lake Montessori School

Dear Parent,

Communication between parents and school continues to be an important priority at CLMS, therefore we are continuing to use SchoolReach, a telephone broadcast system. The service is used to communicate general announcements and reminders, as well as, notifying all households and parents by phone within minutes of a school closing or an emergency should it arise. SchoolReach is a company specializing in school-to-parent communications. Crystal Lake Montessori School will continue to report school closings due to snow or weather to The Emergency Closing Center and will use this system as an overlay to the public announcements.

When used, the service will call all phone numbers in our selected parent contact lists and will deliver a recorded message. The service will deliver the message to both live answer and answering machines. No answers (phones ringing over 40 sec.) and busies will be automatically retried twice in fifteen minute intervals after the initial call.

### **PLEASE NOTE THE FOLLOWING:**

- 1) This requires NO registration by the parent on the SchoolReach website.
- 2) All information and contact numbers are strictly secure and confidential and are only used for the purposes described herein.

### **Here is some specific information you should know:**

- **Caller ID:** The Call ID will display 815-338-0013 or CLMS, which is the main number Crystal lake Montessori.
- **Live Answers:** There is a short pause at the beginning of the message, usually a few seconds. Answer your phone as you normally would; "hello" and hold for the message to begin. Multiple "hellos" will delay the message. Inform all family members who may answer your phone of this process.
- **Answering Machines:** The system will detect that your machine has answered and will play the recording to your machine. The phone will ring for up to 40 seconds. Make sure that your machine answers after four rings or you may miss the message.
- **Message Repeat:** At the end of the message you will be prompted to 'press any key' to hear the message again. This is very helpful when a child answers the phone and hands it to a parent, who can then 'repeat' the message in its entirety.

### **If you have any questions, please contact us.**

SchoolReach, the service provider, uses the best available technology in the industry to detect the difference between human answer and machine or voicemail answer.

### **Here's how detection works:**

1. The system detects and measures the voice energy when the phone is answered.
2. The system measures this energy in combination with the background noise and line impairments.
3. If the system determines that it is a "live" answer, it will immediately start playing the message.
4. If the system determines that it is a machine, it will wait for three full seconds of silence before playing the message with a maximum wait time of twenty seconds.
5. If the system cannot make a determination, it will default to answering machine thus requiring several seconds of silence for the message to play. In this case, you may hear a prompt to "press any key to hear the message immediately."

### **Some reasons for false detection:**

1. Loud background noise; television, radio, general noisy environment.
2. A cordless phone that has static or other foreign noise.
3. Not saying "hello" or repeatedly saying "hello".
4. Cellular phones which, when called, have the 'ringback tones' music option.
5. Answering machine/voice mail greetings which are too long or have long pauses in speech.

## What can be done to remedy this?

1. Do not say "hello" more than once. If the system detected your answer incorrectly, all noise will reset the three-second counter.
2. If, after you answer, the message does not immediately play, cover the mouthpiece of the phone to cutout all background noise. The message should begin after three seconds.

Please make every effort to provide the school with current and accurate phone information any time there is a change to ensure that you do not miss important information.

## What to do if you think you've missed a SchoolReach voice message.

If you ever feel you may have missed a SchoolReach voice message or just want to check to be sure, you can dial our Message Retrieval Line. From whichever phone(s) you want to check for messages to, dial toll-free: **855-955-8500** and follow the prompts to hear any/all messages sent through SchoolReach over the last 30 days. Please contact the school if you suspect your phone number is not being called by the system or if you ever have a change of number. Thank You.

