Dr. Montessori’s & Character Education

by Christina Marsh Franklin

“Establishing lasting peace is the work of education; all politics can do is keep us out of war.”
~ Dr. Maria Montessori ~

“Peace Education” is a major component of Montessori’s pedagogy. In her view, education was not an end in itself, but rather the means by which global change was (and is) created. By enabling children to discover facts and wrestle with difficult situations for themselves, the Montessori Method is intended to create future human beings that are capable of tackling the world’s problems. At the same time, the emphasis on character development, care of others, care of the environment, and grace and courtesy are intended to make those future world changers into ones who will do so responsibly and compassionately.

On the International Day of Peace, this quote by Dr. Montessori reminded us that the “peace” her education system was designed to create was not simply the lack of obvious conflict, but an active and ongoing commitment to work for fairness and equity - the things that make true peace possible.

A Very Special Evening Principal’s Café

Orangevale Campus parents are invited by principal, Kim Aldridge, to join her for a great opportunity to have an open dialogue with MaryEllen Kordas.

MaryEllen’s career in Montessori education spans 40 years. She served on the board of the American Montessori Society recently as president and served as a member of the MPPI Council (Montessori Public Policy Initiative). In addition to that, she provides consulting services to schools, boards, and staff (MEK Consultants), and was the founding president of the board of a Montessori Charter School in Vista, California.

MaryEllen has represented Montessori education internationally in China, Prague and Poland. She is on the management faculty at the Center for Montessori Education in New York. Mary Ellen developed and led the first AMS-accredited school in California, which is one of the largest single-campus schools in the country, with a staff of 70 teachers and administrators serving 500 children from toddler level through 8th grade. The school’s state-of-the-art facility includes a gym, named in her honor, 24 classrooms, and a cultural center on 7 acres.

In 2010, Mary Ellen was named Bay Area Woman of the Year for innovation in the financing of a not for profit organization. Through Mary Ellen’s expertise in financing capital projects, the school raised over 2 million dollars in donations and funded the 50,000-sq. ft. campus using tax free bonds.

New Buddy Bench

Orangevale playground now hosts a Buddy Bench, donated by CeCe Nelson of the Denali Class. Last year for her advocacy project, CeCe collected donations, then had the bench made. (cont. page 2)
**Buddy Bench** (cont. from page 1)

The purpose of the bench is for students to sit on the bench who are looking for someone to play with, and then children know to ask that peer to join their activity.

CeCe will be touring all the classrooms to explain how the bench is to be used. This is an important part of the school’s emphasis on respect and kindness, and CeCe’s efforts are very much appreciated.

**Festival Baskets Galore!**

Families are in for a treat this Friday at the Orangevale Campus Harvest Festival. There will be many games and activities, as well as amazing baskets and donated items for the silent auction.

The office is brimming with baskets for an early preview, so stop by and pick out what you will want to bid on this Friday.

Tickets for games and food are also on sale in the office for an early discount.