

Montessori Memories

By Wendy Peter
CoMP President

This holiday season I once again tried to plan things for my child that would create happy holiday memories. You know, things like decorating the Christmas tree, baking cookies, assembling a gingerbread house, making crafty gifts for grandparents, and participating in charitable giving.

Then, right smack in the middle of the jolly holiday season I came to the realization that maybe I shouldn't try so hard. Maybe it's impossible to map out every little "great memory" detail. Maybe the fond memories will just happen.

Over this past week I witnessed some great memories in the making. One example was seeing my son together with his friends at the CoMP carousel night. I watched them ride around and around on the carousel, laughing, seeing who could collect the most carousel rings, then watched them hesitantly turn all their rings over to the carousel worker. These friendships started in first grade and are still flourishing to this day.

I also witnessed another fun night at the Balboa "Practice Campout." The kids got together for some pizza, s'mores, arts and crafts, safety lessons and comradeship while the parents went out and did whatever they wanted for a few hours.

When it was time to pick up my son, I peeked through the gym window and all I could see were glow sticks swirling through the air in the dimly lit gym. When I opened the door, I heard nothing but and laughter and music. Once again, I knew fond memories were being created at that moment.

It brings me joy to know that we are part of a caring community of Montessori families and teachers. It's a community that sees children as they truly are and encourages a sense of wonder and discovery. It's a community that fosters an

environment of respect and helpfulness and emphasizes the importance of how to be a contributor to our society.

As of this writing, our family has not yet decorated the tree, or baked the cookies, or assembled the gingerbread house but I do take comfort in knowing that in our Montessori community, great memories are being made...not just during the holiday season but all year long!

Lattes for CoMP

Can you live without a few lattes each month? You can make a difference simply by donating \$10 a month to CoMP.

Do you remember how you felt when you found out your child got into the Montessori program? Make sure other families will experience that feeling. Pay it forward by keeping the Montessori program going strong. Join the many CoMP families who have responded to the appeal letter by setting up a monthly donation.

How does CoMP use the donations? To sustain and grow the Montessori program by sponsoring new teachers' Montessori training and providing financial support to the current teachers for Montessori continuing education. It's pretty simple: without teachers there is no Montessori program.

It's easy to set up a monthly donation:

- Log onto CoMP's website:
www.SpokanePublicMontessori.org.
- Click on the "Contact Us/Donate Now" tab.
- Click on the GuideStar® icon
- Follow the simple instructions

-OR-

- Log onto your online bill pay account.
- Follow the prompts for setting up a recurring donation.

- Amalie Day
Past President & Acting Treasurer

S'mores in December

Parents have night out while kids camp in

By Colleen King
Balboa Teacher

Thirty children, a handful of parents and a few tired teachers met to raise some money, practice for our spring campout and allow others a "Night Out" at Balboa on Friday, December 4th. Just like at campout, we started with an opening ceremony. An indoor campfire model set the mood as everyone had a chance to express his/her hopes for the evening. "I hope everyone has a chance to share fun times with people they haven't played with before." "I hope everyone has fun." "My wish is that everyone has a safe, interesting evening."

One highlight of the evening included a mini first aid class where the 6th grade students and our nurse in pearls, Karen White shared their expertise, answering questions and relieving fears. Crafts are an ever present part of any campout and many children enjoyed stringing popcorn, cutting out snowflakes, folding origami or creating pet

rocks. While some were creating crafts others thought it would be fun to work on skits which they hoped to share. So even in a few hours, we ended up with a talent show which was enjoyed by all while consuming S'mores.

Near the end of the evening we turned to science and saw the results of a chemical reaction in the form of 'glow sticks.' We learned that when you put 120 glow sticks, 30 children in a dark gym mixed together with dance music you can create indoor fireworks.

As the dancing wound down and parents came to pick up their children, we all got in a circle for our closing ceremony. We shared what we enjoyed at the practice camp out and what we enjoyed during our "Night Out."

We did raise a few hundred dollars to help with

campout expenses but even more importantly everyone - children, parents and teachers, left Balboa's first "Parents' Night Out" with smiles on their faces. That is a true measure of success.



A practice "campfire" is cool.

Let it begin with me

“Establishing lasting peace
is the work of education.”

-Dr. Maria Montessori



Peace Partners and pen pals write
together during a visit at Balboa.

Everything has Peace

Community Poem by Mrs. King's Class

Everything has Peace.

Peace leads people to calm waters.

We all should have peace and spread it throughout the whole world, like peanut butter and jelly on bread.

Peace is a gift, a gift from God.

Peace is like a bird flying between dreams with nothing to harm it as it floats through the dreams as easily as fish in a planet of calm water.

When you are in a time of need, or a time of war, stop and think of peace.

When I think of peace I think of women and children's tears racing down their cheeks because of all the men and women who have died in the war. I thank those men for trying to keep peace in our country.

Peace means not to fight. Instead it means to love each other.

Peace is loving and caring for one another.

Peace is like baby birds nestled against their mother.

Peace is happiness and fun times and hanging out with our friends and family.

Peace is penguins.

Peace can come through music.

Reflections on a peace poem

By Daniel Tsybulnik

Balboa Student

“I offer you peace” is one of my most favorite lines in the poem. When I hear it, I see all the children in the world giving hope and peace to each other and I feel more calm and peaceful.

The poem I hear everyday really makes me think about all the people that are suffering and need help. So when we say it together, I have the feeling that those people know that someone is offering peace and love to them and to each other.

At the very last line when we say, “Let's work together!” and we hold hands, I see the circle as Earth and that the kids are the children of the world connecting by holding hands. That's how I feel about the Peace Poem.

The Peace of Nature

By Haleigh Meacham

Balboa student

There's a lot of peace in our nature!

Like how the birds sing us a song in the morning,

Like when the flowers bloom in beauty,

Like when the wind blows and lifts our sadness,

To show and shine the happiness inside of all of us.

Like when the sun shines on our peaceful nature,

Like when the sun is the main light of peace,

This helps us grow and show our inner peace,

I think that there's peace in our nature,

And that nature grows in our peace!

Peace Partners

By a Balboa teacher

Writing to and visiting with our pen pals is a favorite event at Balboa. Every year we each team up with a student from Japan who is studying here in the U.S. either at Mukagawa Fort Wright Institute or the EWU Asian Studies program. Through letters we get to know our pen pals. We know what food they love and their favorite color. We practice our best letter writing skills and are in awe of the beautiful art work and design that accompany their letters to us. As excitement of the pending visit grows, we pull out our letters to reread and share them again with our friends.

Finally, the big day arrives. We are eager, nervous and a little shy. They must be too, even though they are much older than us. They enter our classroom in silence and there are nervous giggles and speculation as we look for the student who might be “ours.” Our teacher clumsily pronounces their names and matches us up. Our pen pals are beautiful, smiling and so kind. Soon they are reading to us, and we give them a tour of our classroom and

show them how to use some of our materials. They show us how to make origami cameras, cranes and stars. All too quickly it is time for them to return to their school. We take tons of pictures and give lots of hugs. We can't wait to visit them, our new friends, at their school.

A candle for peace

By Erin Chaves

Jefferson Student

When we learned the song “Light a Candle for Peace”, in music, I, and every other kid there, wondered why we were learning it. Now we know. On September 21st, from 10:54 to 10:59 we sang it in the hallway while two classmates held candles, all for International World Peace Day. When we started, it was very noisy, but as we got deeper into the song, it became a beat that was fun to follow. I occasionally saw heads peer out at us, but I didn't care. It was a wonderful feeling, the feeling of going and not stopping. When it was finally over, and the candles were blown out, I knew some other school would take it up, and then another, and another, and another, all around the world.

Introducing new CoMP board members

By Kathryn Picanco

CoMP President-Elect

The CoMP Board is comprised of parent representatives, teachers, and administrators from Jefferson and Balboa. This year, there are three new board members serving the public Montessori community.

Karyn Woodard represents Jefferson and is the mother of Claire, a fourth grader, and Grace, a 7th grader and Montessori graduate. She is a registered nurse at Sacred Heart. Karyn states her “favorite aspect of Montessori is how it encourages and creates this lifetime love of learning because of the freedom it allows. I also love the personal responsibility it teaches, which I think allows children to see beyond themselves and realize that their actions

not only affect themselves, but everyone around them. And the manipulative math lessons are amazing!”

Lori Rodriguez is the mother of Myah, a third grader at Balboa. Lori is a hazardous waste compliance inspector for the Washington Department of Ecology. She enjoys hiking, camping, volunteering and doing anything with her daughter.

Meredith Lombardi represents Balboa as well. Her son, Mason, is a first grader. Meredith is director of the Spokane Montessori School North. She notes that what she loves about the Montessori program is that “my son has the opportunity to grow and learn in an environment that supports his natural development.”