

THE *Montessori* Observer

April 2009

The Montessori Observer is an online publication that features articles about Montessori principles and the Arbor community.

Arbor Montessori School

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The Greening of Arbor

Arbor Montessori has always valued the idea that children and their mentors are stewards of the earth. All this month, we are finding ways to encourage our students to be mindful of the planet we call home. The elementary kids have been outside with Mark Warren finding signs of spring. On Earth Day, April 22, we are welcoming our first Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) delivery! And on April 24, each class is doing something to commemorate the aptly-named Arbor Day. At the middle school level, some of our enterprising students were recognized at the EPA's Earth Day Glow Challenge (article in this issue!) and others are marshalling the energies of our very own honey bees! These, and many others, are prime examples of how Arbor's community can "plant the seeds" for an ecologically-minded future.

The Arbor Auction is already gearing up for next year!

**An Epic Adventure
40 Years in the
Making...
Homecoming 2010
March 20, 2010**

Who will be Homecoming King and Queen? Plan to be part of the celebration!

Middle Schoolers earn Glowing Praise

Arbor students receive tribute at EPA Event

by Mike Cooper



Arbor Montessori middle-school students received a standing ovation from federal environmental workers who heard the seventh- and eighth-graders describe a competition they organized to encourage businesses in Decatur's Oak Grove neighborhood to reduce energy consumption.

The six Arbor students spoke at an Earth Month kickoff event organized by the U. S. Environmental Protection Agency at the Sam Nunn Atlanta Federal Center in downtown Atlanta.

Hannah Brown, Paula Cheng, Cameron Futral, Devin Mashman, Aidan O'Reilly and Leigh Kathryn Vines told about 200 EPA and other federal employees about the Glow Challenge, which asked businesses to reduce their use of electricity.

"This is just a great illustration that we all have a part to play," said Beverly Banister, EPA Region 4 Acting Deputy Regional Administrator, as she presented the students with an EPA "Tribute of Appreciation."

Student Paula Cheng explained that the Glow Challenge "was a competition between numerous companies in the Oak Grove area to see who could reduce their electrical usage by the highest percentage."

"We walked around the Oak Grove area explaining to businesses what the Glow challenge was," Cheng said. Three companies agreed to participate.

"Limetree Gifts, the winner, reduced their electric bills by 31 percent," Cheng said.

"We want to continue and expand the Glow Challenge beyond the Oak Grove area in the coming years."

Hannah Brown said Limetree Gifts "told us they intended to continue these energy-saving tactics in the future." "They helped better our community," she said. "They helped our environment in the fight against global warming."

Arbor's students were introduced at the program by WABE Radio host Steve Goss, whose February 18 interview with the students during a local segment of NPR's "Morning Edition" caught the attention of regional EPA officials.

Leigh Kathryn Vines told the audience that one of the biggest challenges in enlisting participants was "our age and getting companies to take us seriously." "I think we all got something out of this experience," she said. "It was definitely worth it."

"We have the full intention of making the Glow Challenge an annual tradition," Mashman explained. "We together can step off the sidelines and change the course of global warming."

The EPA program also featured Dennis Creech, executive director of the Atlanta-based Southface Energy Institute.

Why Montessori?

Take A Look

[Click here](#) to see a chart on the AMI-USA website outlining the elements of Montessori pedagogy alongside those of traditional education.

~From Martha's Desk

Partnership Giving continues to be a tremendous part of Arbor fundraising! This year Arbor has earned over \$4,000 through **Target's Take Charge of Education Visa** partnership, **Box Tops for Education**, **Kroger**, **Publix**, **Office Depot**, **QSP**, etc. A complete list and explanation of [Giving Partners](#) is on our website. Please remember that these programs are valid year-round. If you have any questions about any of our fundraising programs or Parent Involvement please contact Martha Addison at marthaa@arbormontessori.org.

Alumni News

NEW! Search for "Arbor Montessori School, The Best School Ever!" on Facebook and see what your classmates are up to--anyone can join!

From **Lindsay Wong**, as she graduates from Medical School at Wake Forest University:

"To Betty, Kate, Jan, Dianne and Everyone else,
You were there at the beginning when I first began exploring the environment with my hands and I credit my Montessori education with leading me into surgery - I will now be a pediatric plastic surgeon. Thank you and I wish you the best!"

Lindsay Wong's sister, Hayes, is finishing her first year of medical school at Wake Forest and sister Abby is in pre-med in the Honors Program at UGA.

Harper Addison writes from the Big Apple:

I moved to New York last August and am currently enrolled at The Ailey School, which is the school associated with Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater. I take about 17 dance classes a week and spend my free time soaking my feet and trying to find my way around the city. It's been a bit of an adjustment coming straight from Davidson, NC and small-town college life but a great experience. I graduated in May from Davidson with a B.S. in biology (who would have ever thought biology and I would get along?) and a minor in Southern Studies (yes, I was the absolute last person to do that at Davidson, ever. They just ended the minor this past year). A big part of my decision to major in biology was based on an opportunity I had to go to Kenya and study abroad for a semester. I did end up doing that and studying wildlife management, ecology and environmental policy in the Kenyan bush for a semester in addition to working on my own directed research. It was an absolutely life-changing experience and I know that at some point I will find my way back there (I also know that I owe Arbor a big thank you for all the time we spent at Medicine Bow. I'm pretty sure I wouldn't have found scorpions, poisonous snakes, cold showers and dust storms appealing if I hadn't been at Arbor all those years).

What is Arbor doing for Arbor Day?

Teachers tell us what their classes are doing on Arbor Day, this Fri., Apr. 24:

Mickey says, "In Enrichment we will be adding plants to our patio. We may be decorating the picnic table as well."

The Middle School is planning to plant pecan trees or blueberry bushes on the Mason's lot and save some trees by removing kudzu around the campus.

Emilie will take the third years to the Outdoor Classroom (built by a former middle school student) and tell them the Plant Story. We also plan to tend our garden and plant some sunflower seeds for the summer.

Shiela is planning for the afternoon children to plant seeds or plants.

Deedee says, "We've been planting all week and hopefully will be finished by Friday. I've

asked the middle school intern to take a couple of kids at a time to identify trees and leaves, then do leaf rubbings. If the weather is nice, we'll picnic. Of course we'll read books and sing songs, and talk about taking care of nature. Maybe we'll do a trash pick up around the school, or take a field trip to see the middle school garden and bees."

"We're doing general garden work this week, a tree mural, tree jeopardy at the end of the day Thursday, and I'm looking for a sassafras tree to plant first thing on Friday morning. There used to be a sassafras behind the "mobile classroom," but it's long gone and I love the mitten-and-glove-shaped leaves. Sometimes we make sassafras tea at Medicine Bow. We've also talked about the history of Arbor Day and Earth Day." Kate

Cindy's class will work in the garden and some students will do their writing work outdoors.

Becky writes, "The kids in Becca's class will be working all week with Sean, our intern, making outdoor nature art. We'll have photos to share at the conclusion. Also, some of the children have written poems and drawn posters in celebration of Earth Day tomorrow. On Friday we'll spend some time sprucing up our outside work area for Arbor Day."



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