

# THE COMMUNICATOR

MONTESSORI CHILDREN'S COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER

MAY 2018

## A Note from the School Head:

The Montessori child's journey through geography begins at a very young age. Children in the Children's House Program are learning about Landforms and Continent Maps as a prelude to more extensive geography explorations in the Lower and Upper Elementary Levels. The Middle School culminates with an all-year research project in preparation for the Montessori Model United Nations in New York City.

Montessori felt that children should know about the world around them - its physical features, resources, cultures, and peoples in an effort to help them to develop cultural awareness, respect, and sensitivity. Her greatest desire was for children to have the education to advocate for peace throughout the world through a strong background in information about other civilizations.

## Important Dates:

May 1 & May 3: 7pm  
6th Year Senior Project  
Presentations

May 9—11  
UE Ohio Trip

May 13:  
Mother's Day

May 22:  
Move-Up Day

May 24:  
Last Day of Extended Day

May 28:  
Memorial Day Parade

## MCC in the community



Thank you to Amy Scafuri and her travelling Art Car for coming to the  
Spring Art Show!

And thank you to everyone who worked so hard to make the evening a  
night of fun, creativity, community, and friendship.

## Children's House and All Day Montessori

Much like the other classroom areas of Children's House, the Cultural Area offers students a hands-on approach to topics, including Geography. Several materials remain on the shelves all year, providing children with the foundation needed to expand their knowledge of Geography. A colored continent globe helps children recall continent names and colors, keeping everything consistent, while they attempt to complete additional continent materials. There is also a land and water globe, in which children can touch continents made from sandpaper. This tactile experience helps create motor memory, providing yet another method for children to recall the continents.

Land, air, and water is another foundational concept in the Cultural Area. Once children receive this initial lesson, they solidify their understanding through other works. One work the children particularly love is a matching work, in which animals are matched to land, air, or water, based on where they thrive. Land and water forms are another material the children can select throughout the year. Like everything else in the classroom, the work enriches their vocabulary by introducing words like, island, lake, bay, cape, peninsula, gulf, strait, isthmus, and archipelago. The Continent Puzzle Maps, Flags, and Continent Folders, are all hands-on materials children use to build their foundation for Geography.



After completing a map of the world, children can extend their work by drawing and coloring or painting the continents. Another extension of this work involves tracing the continents, then using a push pin to poke the images out, and glue them onto a large piece of paper.

This Land and Water form work allows children to pour water and visually see the difference between "lake" and "island." The child is working to understand Geography in a physical way, as he carries the material to a workspace, fills his pitcher with water, and then pours water into the forms.





Mr. Farinelli demonstrates erosion through the "Work of Water" lesson.



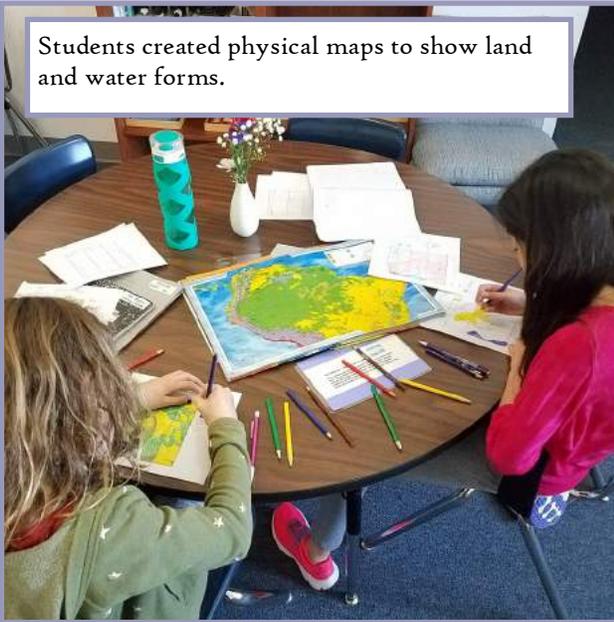
Students use models and cards to learn the parts of a volcano.

### Lower Elementary

Maria Montessori lived during the turmoil caused by both World Wars. She hoped that a more peaceful existence could be developed starting with the younger generation. By learning about and understanding both the physical and cultural geography of our universe, she believed that children would understand our significance on earth and the importance of coexisting peacefully.

The geography curriculum in Lower Elementary starts with the 5 Great Lessons (The Creation of the Universe, the Formation of Earth, the Coming of Humans, the History of Communication, and the History of Numbers.) Many lessons follow those, including the study of Land and Water Forms and their parts, Sun and Earth, the Composition of Earth, the Work of Water, the study of Maps, and Economic Geography. Understanding our interdependence and the effect that we as humans can and do have on our earth and its living and nonliving parts is significant and vital to our coexistence, especially at this 2nd plane of development when children are developing their social conscience and awareness of fairness and developing social relationships.

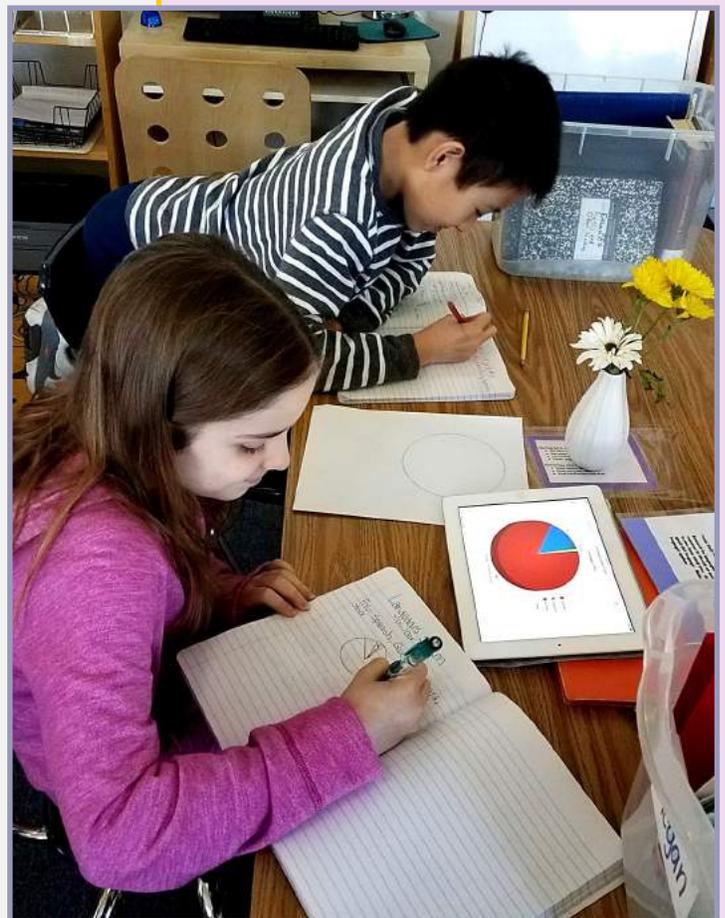
Students created physical maps to show land and water forms.



Students use their knowledge of latitude and longitude to locate places in South America.

### Upper Elementary

Knowledge of geography connects us to the world, past and present. While Montessori Cosmic Education takes the elementary students on a chronological journey from the beginning of the stars to the beginning of human civilizations, at MCC, we narrow the view by placing attention on two continents at a time each year. This year, our focus is on North and South America. The Upper Elementary students have been immersed in the study of political and physical maps of both continents, connecting for themselves how different civilizations evolved based on how the fundamental needs of shelter, food, and clothing were met depending on the landscape. The students make use of maps, atlases, and Google Earth. They study the influence of latitude on climate and the influence of longitude on time zones. In Upper Elementary, we also focus on how the Age of Exploration, when long distance boat travel became possible and prevalent, caused civilizations from the different continents to collide for the first time. The students assess the impact of these collisions by studying the language and cultural influences from one continent to another that are present today.



Students researched the languages spoken in South America and created pie charts based upon their data.

## Middle School

The SMMS weekly schedule does not include a Geography class, but what it does feature are multiple opportunities for geography learning across the curriculum.

A visitor to the Middle School's thrice-weekly current events discussion will likely hear the phrase, "To the map!" Once gathered around the map, the students explore the location and shared borders of the nation or nations we are discussing. The discussion usually includes the noting of coastlines and the water rights essential for trade.

The study of geography is an integral part of the Middle School students' preparation for the Montessori Model United Nations (MMUN). The students begin by studying the physical geography, as well as the population, natural resources, and major industries of the nation they will represent. In 2016, the students represented Vietnam and Sierra Leone. In 2018, the students represented Estonia. Once they are feeling well-versed in their chosen country, the students research the topics their MMUN committees will be discussing. These topics often require an understanding of global issues with implications in geography such as the plight of refugees, world poverty, migration, disaster risk reduction, the illicit trade of weapons, and containing atomic radiation. Students write position papers and deliver speeches on the topic from the point of view of the nation they are representing and then consider the topic from the point of view of all the other nations represented. A deep, working knowledge of geography is thus key to all our MMUN work.

Geography also plays a role in all of our Humanities studies, as the study of humans and how they live together in society cannot be fully understood without an awareness of the physical features of the places they inhabit.



Students prepared information about Estonia and created a display board for MMUN



Students sew and proudly display the Estonian flag.