

# Montessori Radmoor Reflections

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October 2008

### Strategic Planning

A group of thirty parents, staff, and board members recently convened to create a Strategic Plan focusing on the progress the school wants to make in the next 3-5 years. This plan will include the following components:

**Goal 1:** Ensure the curriculum and enrichment opportunities at the School adhere to the Montessori philosophy and practices.

**Goal 2:** Plan for long-term financial stability.

**Goal 3:** Develop and implement a marketing/communications plan.

**Goal 4:** Develop a master facilities plan that meets the needs of a Montessori learning environment.

**Goal 5:** Increase parental awareness and involvement.

**Goal 6:** Ensure a student enrollment plan that maximizes use of facilities and that meets the needs of current and prospective families.

In ensuing newsletters we will give you more details and updates of these goals, and what the committees will be focusing on in the future.

We would also like to thank all who participated in this very worthwhile and helpful event.

### Scrip Program

Montessori Radmoor School is now offering a Scrip Program to its families. Scrip is simply a word that means "substitute money" – in other words, scrip is gift certificates from national and local retailers. They're the same gift certificates that you buy at the store.

Many popular retailers participate in our scrip program, including Kohl's, Disney, The Gap, Shell, Panera Bread, Starbucks, Red Lobster and many, many others.

We will be offering families two options for utilizing this revenue: 1. Money earned will be credited to your account on a quarterly basis. 2. Families who are in a position to help others can have money added to our scholarship fund. This year we have five families supported by our scholarship fund. Either way, a family at Montessori Radmoor has benefited.

If you need additional facts about scrip or are interested in participating, please contact Melinda Schultz at 517-351-3655 x14 or at [mschultz@okemosmontessori.com](mailto:mschultz@okemosmontessori.com).



### Website

We will be updating our website with many new options, so keep checking in at [www.okemosmontessori.com](http://www.okemosmontessori.com). We will include a calendar of upcoming events, where we always look forward to seeing our Alumni.

### Alumni Relations

#### ***Our Alumni are important to us!***

Montessori Radmoor School is creating a master database with accurate addresses and phone numbers, so that we may maintain a relationship with all of our past students. We will be contacting you, or feel free to get in touch with us. We will also create and distribute two alumni newsletters, one in the fall and one in the spring.

We would like to have alumni events throughout the year. Our first event will take place on **Friday, December 5, 2008**, and will be for the alumni who are currently attending middle school and high school. We invite you to meet at the school for pizza and an opportunity to see old friends and create new relationships. If you are interested in attending this event, please contact the office at 517-351-3655.

Adult and family events will be forthcoming.

#### ***Upcoming Events and Fundraisers (Save the Dates!)***

'After Hours' Auction – March 28, 2009

International Night – April 24, 2009

### Developing Grants

Montessori Radmoor School is a non-profit organization. All of the tuition costs are utilized for staff compensation and building maintenance. As we grow and as time passes, we find that we require additional items and maintenance that cannot be covered by the budget. Past examples include the gymnasium floor, playground equipment, commercial dishwasher, etc. We have previously used the monies from our fundraisers to cover these costs. We are now hopeful that we can acquire money through the grant process to cover more of these expenses.

**Montessori Radmoor School**

**Established 1968**

*"Work is necessary; it can be nothing less than a passion; a person is happy in accomplishment."*

*Maria Montessori*

## Let It Rot

By Hannah,  
4<sup>th</sup> Year Elementary

Let it rot, let it rot.  
Put it in the compost  
pot.  
Let it rot, let it rot.  
To rot, it has to be  
living.

Fruits and vegetables  
are all yummy, but  
when you're done and  
it's not all in your  
tummy, put it in the  
compost pot to rot.

Moo Moo, that won't  
do, that can't go in the  
compost pot. Dairy  
products, meat  
products, none of that  
can go in the compost  
pot....to rot.



NEW

## Going Green:

### 1 Project at a Time

It is our hope to become a "green" school. What does that mean? The key goal is that the resources we utilize do not leave indelible footprints on our environment. What environmentally friendly steps are we taking in order to make this a reality?

We are working on having a greenhouse in order to produce the vegetables that we offer for our hot lunch program. The Auction that helped fund our new gym floor is one of the resources we are using to fund this project.

In everything we do, we should keep the motto, **Reduce, Reuse and Recycle** foremost in our minds.



We are getting the information for becoming a Green Certified school.



We have a committee that includes teachers, board members and parents, who are currently researching different methods to be environmentally responsible.

One step we have already taken is composting. We are currently alternating between two compost bins. While one is doing the job of producing the humus, the other is receiving all of the scraps from the classrooms and kitchens. Everyone is involved: toddler, primary to elementary. It takes 14 days to produce the humus, and then we store the humus for future use on our site. The process then begins all over again.

The children used some of the funds from last year's businesses, mentioned below, to purchase our composting equipment. We are hopeful that we will produce enough humus for our school's needs, in addition to being able to sell it to our school community.



## Elementary Business Ventures

The elementary children always seem to have projects that are ongoing, such as: bake sales to raise funds for foster family gifts during the holidays, animal protection or adoption, and food banks. They are philanthropic individuals who strive to help others in need. Through this innate concern for helping others, including their school environment, several activities were created. While raising money for their interests, the children can learn how to run a business and manage funds. The children used some of the funds from last year's businesses to purchase our composting equipment (mentioned above). Here is a list of their ventures:

**Bagel Breakfasts** – A monthly occurrence. The children plan the event, order the product and other food items, and sell it to the parents in shifts at the school from 8-9 in the morning. Pre-orders are also accepted for pick-up that morning. The next Bagel Breakfast is **October, 31<sup>st</sup>**.

**Note cards** – The children are prolific artists, so the children choose their favorite piece and print packs of note cards with their unique drawings on them right before the holiday season. Available in November.

**Spaghetti Supper** – The children buy and then make a full course Spaghetti Supper. Tickets are sold in the spring and it is open to Radmoor Families.

**Bake Sales** – Held as needed to support a variety of causes.

## Michelle Benson, Montessori Radmoor Alumnus

By Dr. Connie Wolfe

September 14, 2008

Michelle Benson recently visited Radmoor to see one of her former teachers, Julie. Michelle attended Montessori Radmoor from toddler through third grade. As a 2006 Okemos High School graduate, Michelle Benson now attends Lansing Community College. She graciously agreed to this interview. Over coffee Michelle seemed delighted as she described her fond memories of Radmoor. She began by saying that because she attended Montessori school, her philosophy and perspectives on life are broad and diverse.

She remembers being taught to be responsible for things, and to be polite to one another. She described her elementary class adopting a tree on the nature trail outside. Students were responsible for it and watched it change throughout the seasons and years. Michelle noted that she learned that as people change, we remain the same person, but look different as we change. She also learned from her mistakes, as the Montessori material has built in assessment, so a child can be successful once they correct their mistakes. She called Montessori “an amazing place – the best place to get a good foundation for lifelong learning”.

Michelle transitioned to Okemos Bennett Woods Elementary in fourth grade at the age of nine. This transition from a small school to a large one was scary for her, but she made friends easily. She missed her Montessori friends too. What was most difficult for her was being in a class of 30 children all one grade, and not having the freedom to work on something for a long time. She indicated that at Montessori she could work longer on story problems in math, but at Bennett Woods, she only had less than an hour. Then she had lots of homework that she was not accustomed to doing. Math and science were easy subjects for her due to her Montessori education.

Outside of school, Michelle participated 13 years in choir, took voice lessons, gymnastics, and dance. She traveled to London, England. In High School she acted in the Beauty and the Beast performance. She attributes her Montessori training with the ease in which she made friends in public school. She described her Montessori friendships, prizing trust, respect, and no peer pressure. She felt she was able to “be herself”. Michelle said she loves to learn. She liked the after school program structure at Montessori where she had some structure, but made choices and still had fun.

Today Michelle is enrolled in Lansing Community College’s entrepreneurial program. She is interested in business and hotel management. She would like to have her own business someday. In addition, she took classes in photography.

Today, she would recommend Montessori to parents of young children, to know that Montessori education is the right choice for their children’s education. With all that she learned at Radmoor, she stresses that the Montessori philosophy shapes the child and enables them to better deal with life in general through trust, responsibility, and understanding different perspectives. She notes that Montessori children can interact with any adult and be taken seriously in their conversation. Michelle said you cannot find this kind of education anywhere else.



Michelle Benson  
Email: [bensonm3@mac.com](mailto:bensonm3@mac.com)

*“Growth is not merely a harmonious increase in size, but a transformation.”*  
**Maria Montessori**

### Montessori Brown Stair

The Brown Stair is a set of ten, graded, rectangular prisms. This material is designed as a sensorial exercise for Montessori classrooms to teach children about weight and volume differential. Traditionally, the blocks are placed randomly on a mat and children pick them up and carry them over to an area, where they arrange them in order from broad to narrow, learning the relationship between heaviness and size.



*"It is the spirit of the child that can determine the course of human progress and lead it perhaps even for a higher form of civilization."*

*Maria Montessori*

### Lila Radway Scholarship

In 2000, the Lila Radway Scholarship fund was established to assist families interested in a Montessori education but unable to afford the full tuition. Currently, private donations and a percentage of our fundraisers help support the scholarship fund. You may donate to the Lila Radway Scholarship fund at any time to help support interested families.