

**November 28, 2011**

**Volume 5, Issue 15**

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**Upcoming Events**

Nov. 30	7th Grade Basketball vs. Lakeland 5 PM (Away)
Dec. 1	Monthly Tuition Installment Due
Dec. 5	7th Grade Basketball vs. Eastside 5 PM (Away @ Butler Elementary)
Dec. 7	6th & 7th Grade Basketball vs. Garrett 5 PM @ Avilla Elementary
Dec. 9	Infant and Toddler Classrooms Closed
Dec. 12	7th Grade Basketball vs. Central Noble 5 PM @ Howe School

**December 2011**

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	28	29	30	1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	1

# Headlines from Oak Farm Montessori School

*Our mission is to provide a Montessori environment that inspires children to reach their potential through meaningful work.*  
 502 Lemper Road Avilla, IN 46710 [www.oakfarm.org](http://www.oakfarm.org) (260) 897-4270

## FROM JUDITH CUNNINGHAM, HEAD OF SCHOOL

### The Annual Toy Dilemma

As parents, we are besieged at this time of year by ads espousing what our children want and need. Many of these ads are aimed at selling products as opposed to providing what is really good for the child. For the very young child, the toys may be over stimulating with too many objects, have uncomfortably bright colors, or hamper the natural development of important abilities such as language (pacifiers) and movement (cribs, swings, and high chairs). Some can be dangerous (walkers and off-gasses from plastic). For the older child they may focus on entertaining rather than educating.

When I think about holiday gift giving for children, I look through the lens of all I've learned as a Montessori educator. There are a few principles I want to share which can help you as parents understand the developmental needs of your children so that you can give them gifts that are not only fun, but also beneficial.

First, look for toys that are not based on passive entertainment but are designed to release children's imagination and unlock their own creativity. For example, a looking or magnifying glass for a young child or binoculars for an older child will unleash a whole new world to them. Oftentimes the simple classics are more enchanting than the newest action figure.

Following are some suggestions to help you provide for your children's developmental needs in a way that will release their creative potential and the joy in your home. These items are not based on entertaining your child but rather on releasing your child's potential to entertain himself. What you will be pleased to see is that such items hold a child's attention much longer than so many of the more heavily advertised "newest hot item". And, these have another advantage—they are usually much more affordable!

- Gifts of music and age-appropriate musical toys or instruments
- Child-size furniture especially a table and chairs
- Architectural blocks and interlocking block sets and toys that allow you to build
- Beautiful sets of coloring crayons or pencils with blank paper of many colors
- Books that can be recommended by your child's teacher or librarian or from prize-winning sources online
- Books that you can read aloud as a family; a great resource is the *Read Aloud Handbook*
- Jigsaw puzzles

The second principle to consider is stewardship. Well-made toys of natural products are not only more beautiful but can be passed down through your family

## FROM JUDITH CUNNINGHAM, HEAD OF SCHOOL

*Continued from page 1*

and eventually even to the grandchildren. Such investments can become family legacies. Toys, rattles, puzzles, tables, and chairs made of wood develop an appreciation for nature and quality and protect the child from unsafe chemicals that are found in many synthetic materials. Dr. Montessori advised us to “give the world to the child”. We can introduce our local heritage and culture by choosing items made by local artisans or from items from local ethnic neighborhoods.

Susan Stephenson, a Montessorian who founded the Michael Olaf Montessori Company, recommends that we make “our home a reflection of our own unique part of the world. Include music, books, foods, crafts, stories from your parents’ and grandparents’ lives, but also include the same elements of cultures from around the world so your child learns that everyone is connected and he or she and your entire family are members of an international community.”

The most important gift is the gift of your time. Sharing time together outdoors is especially enjoyable. A walk with a young child is akin to a walking meditation where each new thing from cracks in the sidewalk, to parades of ants and puddles which we as adults overlook, enchant the child and make a short walk into a long discovery. Such experiences help us adults slow down, forget our plan, and follow the child as he discovers, smells, sees, hears, and touches the outside world. Invite your child to your outside work—raking the leaves, shoveling the snow, washing the car, working in the garden, there is always some little part of the real work that a child can do. For older children, invite them to help you do adult work. Not only will she learn valuable skills but also spending that time together binds parent and child in new ways.

Finally, there is the timely message of the gift of giving. Consider how you as a family can provide joy to others at this time helps children develop compassion for others and appreciation for all they have.

Understanding the principles of gift giving help us raise children who embrace learning, love their cultural heritage, think independently, and reach out with respect and kindness to those in need.

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## IT’S NOT TOO LATE TO DONATE

**By Lyndy Poyser, Primary 4 Teacher**

We are still taking donations for the Avilla-LaOtto Christmas Bureau of hats, mittens, gloves, and scarves plus new or gently-used stuffed animals until November 30. If you have any donations you can send them to school with your child or drop them off at the Victorian Farmhouse.

Sincere thanks go out to all of the students and parents who have already dropped off donations. We have collected six full bags!

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## APPAREL ORDERS BEING ACCEPTED—A GREAT GIFT

**By Kelly Elias**

We are still taking orders for Oak Farm t-shirts and sweatshirts. If you are interested in receiving your order before we leave for Winter Break please place your order ASAP. Oak Farm apparel makes great gifts so don’t miss out. Order forms are available in the main entrance of the Victorian Farmhouse, on the last page of this newsletter, or from [Parents Web>Resource Documents>2011 Order Form\\_Oak Farm Apparel.pdf](#)



# TASTING

By Tracy Reinke, Toddler Teacher



Hadley Tasting a Lemon

Charlie Tasting a Puff Ball  
Mushroom



Have you ever thought why children don't like foods with strong spices and seasonings?

There are five taste sensations when food enters your mouth: Sweet (Sucrose), Umami (taste of amino acids), Sour (HCL), Salty (NaCl), Bitter (Quinine). Each taste sensation has a special location on your tongue to taste that sensation. The average person has 10,000 taste buds on their tongue. These taste buds replace themselves every 2 weeks or so. As a person ages those taste cells don't get replaced. Older people may only have 5,000 working taste buds. Children, when they taste foods, have a stronger sense of taste than adults do. This explains why younger children may not like food with spices or seasonings in them.

Why do people have a food preference?

A lot of our food preferences is determined by our experience. Taste starts as early as the unborn fetus. The fetus is tasting the foods the mother eats thru the amniotic fluid. They become familiar with their food culture and preferences even before they are born. Studies have also shown that there are different areas of the tongue which taste each of the different senses. Papillae are receptors that receive the sense of taste from the food. Some people tend to have a much higher density of papillae in different areas of the tongues. This makes the sensitivity to that particular taste that much greater.

Try try again.

Since children's taste buds are continually changing it is important to expose them to many different tastes and often. Keep trying the same food over and over again. If they are regularly exposed to the food, as well as the replacement of the taste buds, they will begin to develop a true preference for a food or not. There are many different opinions on how many times to try a food before you have a true preference for the food. On average trying a food 15-20 different times will give you a true judge of whether you really like or dislike the food. Don't give up, try try again.



Sabrina tasting a  
red pepper.



Naomi tasting an  
orange pepper.



Afton, Cooper and Delaney  
Lemon tasting

**OAK FARM MONTESSORI SCHOOL  
CLOTHING ORDER FORM 2011-2012**

All clothing this year will be white with a color screen print design or embroidered design. Design is located on the back of this order form.

**SCREEN PRINT OPTIONS**

**Short Sleeve T-shirts**  
Youth Sizes: XS, S, M, L  
Adult Sizes: S, M, L, XL, XXL  
**\$10.50**



**Long Sleeve T-shirts**  
Youth Sizes: S, M, L  
Adult Sizes: S, M, L, XL, XXL  
**\$13.50**



**Hoodies**  
Youth Sizes: S, M, L  
Adult Sizes: S, M, L, XL, XXL  
**\$22.50**



**Crew-neck Sweat Shirt**  
Youth Sizes: S, M, L  
Adult Sizes: S, M, L, XL, XXL  
**\$17.50**



**EMBROIDERY OPTIONS**

**Crew-neck Sweat Shirt**  
Youth Sizes: S, M, L  
Adult Sizes: S, M, L, XL, XXL  
**\$21.00**



**Sport Shirt**  
Youth Sizes: S, M, L  
Women Sizes: S, M, L, XL, XXL  
Men Sizes: S, M, L, XL, XXL  
**\$21.00**



**Ball Cap**  
Youth Size  
Adult Size  
**\$14.50**

Additional \$2.00 for all XXL

Quantity	Item Description	Scr. Pmt.	Embr.	Size (Youth/Adult)	Price	Total

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone #: \_\_\_\_\_

Would you like this order to be sent home with your child?

**If you are interested in seeing prices for a fleece vest or a jacket with embroidery please contact Kelly Elias. These may be available at a later date.**