



HIMS

Monthly News

ARTICLES, EVENTS, PHOTOS, & MORE!

October 2022



Awe and Wonder!

Every school year we pick a staff theme. The idea is that we take a value or piece of the Montessori philosophy and focus on it at a deeper level. In the past we have had themes such as service, wellness, inclusion, and so on. This year our theme is awe and wonder. Montessori education lends itself perfectly to the idea of awe and wonder. Awe is defined as the experience or feeling when faced with perceived vastness and needing to accommodate a new mental schema. In other words finding yourself small in the face of something much bigger than you. Wonder is defined as a sense of the unknown, centering of self, a sudden recognition of meaning. Different people experience awe and wonder in different ways and for different situations. And, while we often mention them together, they are not always dependent on one another. You could experience wonder without awe and vice-versa. However, these two emotions are essential in building a connection to the world around us and to things bigger than ourselves. A child might experience awe during our summer campout at HMS when they are looking up at the stars in the sky. They could experience wonder when they learn about the migration path of the monarch butterfly, or when they hear a frog chirping in our flower garden—where is that frog, how did it get here, why does it stop chirping as I get closer? While awe and wonder aren't things you can explicitly teach—we can provide opportunities for students to experience them. Instead of rushing children from one thing to the next, we allow them to explore materials, get side-tracked in nature, ask lots of questions, and find things they are curious and excited about.

Flower arranging is a popular activity in our Early Childhood classrooms. I was recently walking through the Maple classroom on my way to the Magnolia room to deliver a message. I will admit, I was in a hurry and wasn't planning to stop for chit-chat. However, two students called my name. When I turned to them they were sitting and admiring a newly arranged vase of roses. "Miss Aimee," one of them implored me, "sniff these flowers!" They smelled beautiful and I had to laugh. At HMS, we literally encourage stopping to smell the roses.

I know there are many ideas about Montessori education and it's not until you become part of a Montessori school that you can begin to decipher myth from reality. We hear that Montessori is too strict or too loose. That there's no structure or too much structure. And, of course, every Montessori school is a little different. At HMS, we value content and context in the curriculum. We think academic learning is very important. And, we also know that academic learning doesn't have to be—actually shouldn't be—the only component of education. When schools talk about educating the whole child they are often referring to character building, social-emotional learning, movement, and self-awareness. We value these things, as well. But in Montessori we take it one step further by encouraging our students opportunities both on campus and off campus to step back, take in the world, and be curious.

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Awe and wonder aren't just warm-fuzzies. They also are linked to prosocial behaviors, such as calming ourselves, caring for others, helpfulness, and friendliness. As we try to put the Covid pandemic behind us, awe and wonder are two emotions that many psychologists are studying in more depth. There are several articles about the importance of bringing awe and wonder to the workplace and the classroom. As one writer says, Moments of awe-inspired wonder, are the exclamation marks on life. (Royes, Medium.com, September 2021) Dr. Montessori was ahead of her time, she knew that allowing children opportunities to experience awe and wonder increased their engagement with others, their appreciation of the world, and their willingness to try new things.

One of the ways we can increase our students' awe and wonder is by paying attention more to the world around us. When we allow ourselves to experience these emotions, we are more likely to allow our children to do the same. This year as a staff we are sharing stories, experiences, and ideas about awe and wonder. In our classrooms we are intentionally creating time for students to be outside more, to experience more time in nature, to listen to more stories about other people in our world, and to take their time with their work. At HMS it is important to us that we all are engaged in a wonder-full and awe-some educational experience. The pandemic was challenging in so many ways. Taking moments to push outside of ourselves and marvel at the world around us is important for children and adults alike. And as you move through your own lives, I strongly suggest that you listen to any four-year-old who implores you to stop and smell the roses. They know what they're talking about.

<https://hbr.org/2021/08/why-you-need-to-protect-your-sense-of-wonder-especially-now>

<https://medium.com/5-minute-sweet-spot/7-reasons-why-you-should-look-out-for-awe-inspiring-moments-of-wonder-b165e4485608>

Warmly,
Aimee



Upcoming Events

**All Month
In October**

Annual Fund! Check out more details [HERE](#)



**October 6th
6:00pm**

Early Childhood Parent Ed Night (child and 1 parent)

**October 11th
6:00pm**

Elementary Parent Ed Night (child and 1 parent)

**October 13th
6:00pm**

Jr. High Parent Ed Night
(student and 1 parent)

October 20th

Noon Dismissal - All Classes
(Infant and Toddler Regular schedule)
(Early Childhood - Jr. High unlimited childcare only)

October 21st

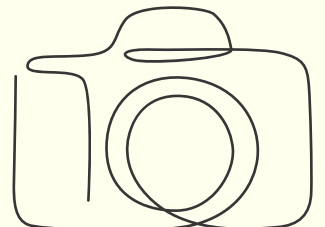
School Closed - Conferences
(Early Childhood - Jr. High unlimited childcare only)

**October 25th
6:00pm**

Infant & Toddler Development Night

**October 31st &
November 1st**

PICTURE DAYS!
More information coming soon



Around Campus



Board Corner

Dear Parents,

I wish you could have been there. It was inspiring, moving, an historic occasion. And it was right here in downtown Gig Harbor.

The mayor of Gig Harbor was there, city council members past and present, a rather large outdoor gathering or curious and interested residents drew closer to the shoreline as the drumming began. More drummers joined in as out on the water a large hand-carved canoe appeared with arrivals from the Puyallup Nation drawing near. They disembarked and speakers came forward and gathered around the veiled, shrouded pole that was the focal point of the completed seven-year project which was about to be unveiled.

One speaker, Connie McCloud, a grandmother, invoked the spirit of her ancestors. She spoke from the heart and recognized the importance of the occasion, the working together of all the peoples of Gig Harbor. There followed words from the artist, Guy Capoean, who crafted the grand carving. His words and work recalled how he came to the location before he began carving the ancient cedar structure before us. He sat for days on the spot where the totem now stood. He gathered from the spirit of the land, the water, the salmon, the surrounding beauty of the view from near and far. He drew vision from the memory of his grandmother, a former member of the Puyallup Tribe.

The unveiling of the massive wooden carving, "Our Fisherman, Our Guardian" followed.

More singing, dancing, drumming, and ceremonial blessing concluded the planned event.

The assembled people were invited to come around and view the giant cedar structure from the front. There was talking and visiting and picture taking with all. We stood together, shifting view points, and talking with neighbors we did not know.

Jeannie and I and two of our grandchildren were there with their parents. The children, one current and one former Harbor Montessori students will always be able to revisit the historic, hallowed spot. I don't know if they will understand the spiritual importance of the event, but I know that the teachings of Maria Montessori always address the spiritual component of all children of all nations, young and old.

I wish you could have been there.

- Brint



Brint Sagle
Board Vice Chair

Brint Sagle was a teacher, director, and college instructor at Clover Park Technical College in early care and education for 36 years. He has continued to volunteer for the board of trustees for Harbor Montessori School and is currently vice chair. At Clover Park Technical College, Brint has been, and continues as a member of the advisory committee for early care and education.

Board Corner

Hi HMS Families

I hope everyone had a wonderful start to the school year. Chloe and my nephew Samuel returned from the annual upper elementary camping trip to Nature Bridge in the Olympic National Park. How fun for the students to hike at Marymere Falls, canoe on Lake Crescent, make new friends, and apparently eat the best food around. The experiences that HMS has to offer are incredible and why I feel so grateful for the teachers and staff to share their passions with our children.

The Board of Trustees would like to invite you to our monthly Board meetings. We meet every third Tuesday of the month at 5:30pm. Please feel free to attend the open sessions of the meetings, which last approximately 30 minutes. To include our Tracyton families, our October meeting will be taking place at the Tracyton campus. The next Gig Harbor meeting will be held on November 15, where in addition, we will be hosting a "Meet & Greet" at 4:30. Look for further details in the upcoming November HMS newsletter. We hope to see you there!

Here's to a fantastic October! May it be joyful for your family.

Warmly,
Wendy
Board Chair



Wendy Holt
Board Chair

Around Campus

