



The Lake Fern Montessorian

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What's new at LFMA!

New Building Update

We have received approval from the City Planning Department to proceed into the pre-application meeting for our next classroom addition. This is the final step before applying for permits. The new addition will be a classroom identical to Mrs. Price's room. The old modular on the south side of the playground, which we are not using, will be demolished. The new building will move about 20 feet further east. The project also includes the addition of a 14x30 storage unit to hold our ever increasing selection of materials and books that are stored in the old modular and every nook and cranny of the other classrooms. Things should move very quickly from here. We're excited!

Increased Internet Security and Filtering

We found that our software based internet filter had some shortcomings which cannot be overcome. So we have invested in a new Internet Security Appliance, the Content Protect CP300. It is a hardware/software based filtering and network management device specifically designed with educational applications in mind. The CP300 was selected as Reviewer's choice in Government Computer News, beating out 5 other appliances in filtering effectiveness. It is completely scalable and customizable, and can grow with additional systems on our network. It will also protect student's personal laptops logged in through our wireless connection with no software required on the laptop – a significant feature. It has fantastic reporting capabilities, allowing staff to identify what is happening on the network without looking over the kid's shoulders. You can even limit the scale of Google searches! We are currently in the process of installing and customizing the appliance. See www.contentwatch.com for details.

Escape School

The nationally acclaimed Dignity Memorial Escape School, presented by Florida Memorial, is coming to LFMA. The program teaches critical abduction prevention and life-saving tactics on how to survive in dangerous situations. The program helps to dispel fear by teaching proactive strategies in a fun, non-threatening manner. Parents are encouraged to attend this beneficial program with their children to reinforce knowledge that leads to smart choices. Join us on February 27th between 7:00 and 8:00 PM for this special program.

Ident-A-Kid

The Ident-A-Kid program will also be visiting LFMA on Wednesday, February 13th. This program offers parents identification cards for children with their picture, fingerprint, and contact information. For more details see a teacher or visit www.ident-a-kid.com.

Roxanne's Reflections

News for all LFMA families!

◆ This month we will pick up the pace for everyone. There are many things planned throughout February so grab your calendar and set aside these dates.

Many parents have asked how they can get more involved in their children's education. Beginning this month a tree is posted on the office door. Leaves with different ideas are on the tree. You may pick a leaf and present it to a teacher. The teacher will give you the details of the task, and you can pick as many as you like. The tasks range from sharpening pencils for the week to helping clean up the campus. If you have ideas or hidden talents that you would like to share, please let us know. We appreciate the help, and it's a great way to get involved with your child's education and become familiar with the daily routine at LFMA.

Lunch on the Lanai

Many parents and grandparents already visit periodically for lunch. The children love eating with family members. I would like to invite all parents to come to our first "Lunch on the Lanai". This is a day for any parent or grandparent to eat with their child or grandchild. Bring your brown bag lunch and join us on Thursday, February 21st at 11:30 for pre-primary students and 12:00 for elementary level students.

Grab-n-Go Breakfast

To thank all the parents in our Montessori Community for their continued support, we will provide Grab-n-Go breakfast the 2nd Monday of each month from 6:30 to 8:30 AM. Bring your coffee mug in for a fill-up and grab a muffin or bagel for the road!

The LFMA Staff met Monday, January 21st for a fingerprinting, planning and breakfast session. Updated pictures for the Web site were requested, however the photographer had failed to give advance warning and his request was firmly, but politely declined for a later time. Said photographer exited the campus quickly after taking the photo to the right!

Mrs. Price's Class News

◆ I have been so impressed with our students this past month. They came back from their winter break ready to get back into the swing of things, and indeed they have. We have been working on time and money in the past month and will continue with these things as well as moving onto measurement and fractions in math. All of the groups have been progressing in writing and will be spending a great deal of time with journal and letter writing this month. Students have been plodding ahead in all of their curriculum areas, especially reading, and are slated to be finished with the bulk of their curriculum before spring break. This will give us plenty of time to review course material and engage in exciting activities related to our core curriculums.

We will be having a field trip to Wonderworks on March 7th. Payment envelopes with field trip details will be going out this month. A driver list will also be in the foyer if you would like to drive.

I'd like to remind students about our dress code. Many of our students are dressing down not only on Fridays, but throughout the week as well. On Monday through Thursday, students are expected to wear a solid colored shirt with no design, words, etc. and blue, khaki, or black shorts, pants, or skirts. Girls must wear shorts under skirts and dresses. All students should wear sneakers, tennis shoes, or other closed toe shoes. On Fridays, students may dress down and wear designs on their clothing, but characters and slogans are not allowed. Thanks for your cooperation in this matter.



Mrs. Richards Focus on Health!

◆ Mrs. Manley and Mr. Price's class have been participating in a workout session with Mrs. Richards Monday through Friday between 12:30 and 1:00 PM. Everyone has been doing hi/low aerobics, kickboxing, yoga and calisthenics. Please have your child wear or bring tennis shoes each day to provide adequate foot support for these activities. As time goes on, we will change these mini-workouts to keep the students motivated.

On Thursdays, Roxanne adds a nutrition class as well. It has been very interesting to hear the kid's interpretation of "healthy or nutritional" foods.



For me, to live without hate is easy, for I have never felt hate. To live without love I think is impossible, happily impossible, for each one of us.

Jorge Luis Borges
(1899-1986)

Valentine's Day Activities

◆ On Friday February 15th we will have our Valentines Day party. Preschool children will need 33 valentine cards signed only on the back, leave the envelopes blank. This way your child can deliver one card to each friend that day.

Students in Mrs. Price's class may bring in cards if they wish, there are 29 students.

Mrs. Manley's and Mr. Price's class may be a bit old for Valentine's cards (but it won't be too many years before they'll think it's a good idea again). However we also will have a special snack for all levels and each child is asked to bring a serving of cleaned fruit to share. We will provide dip and other treats. If you have any questions, please ask any of the teachers.

Mr. Price's Class News

◆ It's good to be back into the swing of things. In math we are working on beginning geometry and measurement. Please reiterate the importance of step writing and neatness in working out math problems. I am trying to prepare the students with the skills they are going to need to do higher math. In science we are continuing with the human body until the end of the semester when we will transition into the physical sciences. In literature we will be finishing Hatchet which the children seemed to have loved overall. Ask them about the gutcherries, the foolbirds, and the insane moose. In social studies we will continue with American History, transitioning from the Revolutionary War Era to the Early America Era.

I want to address a little bit of confusion with the subject of homework. There seems to be the idea amongst some of the students that homework is not something they are supposed to have. The rule of thumb for homework is generally 15 minutes per night per grade level. Therefore a sixth grade student would have an hour and a half per night of homework/ study time. The work now is much more difficult than what they have had before and it requires study throughout the week in order to do well. There are several students who are seemingly still trying to study the night before or the morning before the test. There is far too much information for them to learn in a short period of time. I myself, with a Masters degree, would have difficulty "cramming" for their spelling tests if I had to. Please make sure students have a set aside study time at home to develop a routine for studying their subjects. We are developing a study program after school. A homework room will be available from 3:30 to 4:30 Monday through Friday. Students are welcome to attend. So if your child stays late, or it is difficult to establish study routines at home, this may be a great opportunity. This is not a substitute for study time at home, but a supplement. Monday tests must be studied over the weekend.

Report cards for the second semester will be available toward the end of February. There is no field trip this month, but payment envelopes for next month's field trip to Wonder Works will be available shortly.

Mrs. Manley's Class News

◆ February is here and it's almost report card time again. I can't believe how fast the school year is going by.

If you haven't already had the opportunity to take a look at your child's math book, we have finally reached geometry. The geometry we are learning is very basic but yet, without the practice from home and school, can be a very tough subject later in life. In language arts we are working on possessives, contractions, and proofreading. In science we are going to be working on the body and its systems. We will also be doing a short unit on sun safety. I believe as a native Floridian, you can't ever have too much education on the sun and how if we are not careful, it can do some major damage to our bodies.

Our regular activity schedule has begun again, and we have had so much fun. On Mondays, we have Spanish. My third and fourth graders are doing wonderfully and I would say it is because of how solid a foundation they had with Mrs. Price. Tuesday's is Art. We have been working on a scratch art drawing that we made ourselves, and we have many more fun activities to look forward to. Wednesday is music with Mr. Price. The kids this past Tuesday were playing instruments with Mr. Price and learning about 4/4 time. It was very cute and they were having a ball. Thursday's are Health/Nutrition with Mrs. Richards. We have had the opportunity to hear about all the wonderful foods they love and then the disappointed face's when Mrs. Richards has told them, "hmmm, even though it tastes good, doesn't always mean it is good for you". Friday is fun day. The special that day is always a craft or a recipe activity. We have had such a fun time, and even though we are working hard we are having a great time doing it.

A quick reminder about uniforms, remember that Monday-Thursday it is a solid color T-shirt and either Khaki slacks or blue jeans. Friday is the only day the students may wear a shirt with a print, design or logo. Please make sure that the Friday clothing is in good taste. I hope your February is very special and filled with love and kindness.

Background Check Update

◆ Frequent readers of the newsletter will remember the editor whining about the Department of Education's requirement for State and National background checks when the staff already has them as required by the county Consumer Health Services. Seems one won't recognize the other. So having no choice, we handed over a thousand dollars and had everyone screened again. We're all just as squeaky clean as we were the first time.

Not to be outdone however, and to add insanity to insult and fiscal injury, Roxanne and myself, as owners, have to have yet a third State level check. The rules say that this check "cannot be submitted with the VECHS account information".

In other words, you have to pay to be printed and screened a third time.

We strongly support these checks and everyone has been background checked at LFMA since we started the school.

But isn't one check at a time sufficient? Why do we have to do the same thing 2 or three times?

Our State and Local Government at work.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- MONDAY, FEBRUARY 18TH, PRESIDENTS DAY

- SCHOOL CLOSED

- MONDAY, FEBRUARY 11TH, "GRAB-N-GO BREAKFAST"

- 6:30 – 8:30 AM, BRING YOUR COFFEE CUP!

- WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 13TH

- IDENT-A-KID AT LFMA

- FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 15TH

- VALENTINES DAY CELEBRATION

- THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 21ST, "LUNCH ON THE LANAI"

- 11:30 (PRESCHOOL) AND 12:00 (ELEMENTARY)

- WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 27TH, ESCAPE SCHOOL

- 7:00 – 8:00 PM, FAMILIES ENCOURAGED TO ATTEND!