



WIMBERLEY  
**Montessori**  
SCHOOL

## October Newsletter 2019

### Primary Classroom:

The transformation that our Primary children have undergone since the first day of school has brought an enormous wave of peace and joy to our classroom climate. The children are finding the internal peace and self-esteem that comes with clear expectations and consistency in their environment. After weeks of diligent and deliberate guiding from Miss Olivia and myself the children are able to take ownership of their classroom in their routines, their care of the environment, and of one another. Now we see the children peacefully exploring their world with an internal calm that comes from the trust they have in their environment. We see this in their engagement with their works, the way in which they express their feelings to one another, and the respect that they show for themselves, each other, and their classroom materials.

Parents are welcome to come and observe our classroom. I have an information sheet posted on our bulletin board regarding observation in our classroom. If this is something you would like to do please email me and we can set a day and time.

This is truly the time in your child's development when they have what Maria Montessori called "an absorbent mind." While our younger first year children spend much of their time in our Practical Life area developing fine motor skills, self-confidence, and memory skills they are also absorbing all that they see and hear our older children doing. I will

regularly hear a younger child pretending to sound out books using the letter sounds they hear being practiced in their classroom or a lovely recitation of numbers they heard being practiced from either our 1-10 shelf or our more advanced math works like the squaring chains. What a rich environment these children have!

Every year I see our children gravitate towards our natural science and geography works. Children of this age love to learn about their world and to be grounded in the reality that they see before them. We do not have to try hard to show them the exquisite beauty of the universe in which they live. They want to know! They ask, observe, and are continually delighted by the mysteries and beauty of the world in which they live. At any time you will see many children making maps of the continents in the classroom to try to better understand their place in the world or you will see many children squatting down, concentrating on an acorn, ant, or leaf outside as they witness the intricacy of nature.

As we take time to appreciate the seasonal changes by noticing the leaves falling, the colors changing, the fresh wind blowing they develop a love of their world.

Jennifer Ober made sun prints with the children using flowers and leaves. In the classroom the children made lovely watercolors of Autumn leaves.

In our Wednesday morning music class with Miss Sarah the children have had so much fun with the music appreciation portion of her class. They love to listen attentively to the "story" of the piece of music they hear and to try to pick out



WIMBERLEY  
**Montessori**  
SCHOOL

what instruments they are hearing. Sarah continually amazes me as she finds new ways to teach the children about whole, half, quarter, and eighth notes, as well as other music theory.

The seeds that we sowed with Miss Frankie have germinated. We have carrots, beets, peas, and nasturtiums growing. Teddy's mom, Carmel, donated several wonderful perennials like a Lady Banks rose, Elderberry bush, and lantana. We thank you so much for making our garden grow!

Our costume parade was so sweet. We had bees, Wonder Women, princesses, Star Wars characters, police officers, train conductors, bats, and many more creative costumes. Perhaps the most exciting for the classroom was our spider with eight legs that glided through, brushing works off the shelves quite unbeknownst to him! I had nothing to fear as our dear Primary children quickly walked behind either picking works up or pushing them further onto the shelves to help prevent the problem. Well done dear Primary children☺.

Happy Autumn ~Vera&Olivia





WIMBERLEY  
**Montessori**  
SCHOOL







# WIMBERLEY Montessori SCHOOL

## Lower Elementary Classroom

We have had a busy month in Lower Elementary! Along with all of our classwork, we took, two field trips. Our first trip was to Blue Hole to use the Nature Journals that we created. The cold weather and wind made it an invigorating experience! Our next trip was to the Gem and Mineral show in Austin. We were able to watch a fossil cleaning demonstration, feel many of the varied textures of rocks and minerals that we'd talked about in class, and observe the surprising changes of rocks under fluorescent light.

In Science we are studying the bat, spider, vulture, and the human skeleton. I was fortunate to see my first wolf spider carrying her babies on her back and brought in a picture to share with the kids. And, as always, labeling our skeleton is a highlight of October.

In Geography we have learned the parts of a flag and will be bringing out two works involving the flags of North and South America. We also worked on our plotting/graphing exercises, which, upon completion, created a monster face and a jack-o-lantern. This is a fun introduction to learning how to find coordinates on a map.

We've read *Monster Road* and learned that an optimistic outlook on life can turn any circumstance into a fun, exciting adventure. In *Golden & Gray* we learned the importance of friendship, and that friends can come from unexpected places. While reading the *Halloween ABC Book*,

the children thought it would be fun to guess what Halloween themed words would be used for each letter and we had a great time brainstorming.

We've expanded on our alphabet exploration and we're currently learning the Greek alphabet, focusing on our enunciation. Later we will introduce a work and try our hand at writing the letters.

In art we created our own Nature Journals. We used decoupage to create the covers, incorporating pictures of what we think of when we think "nature" – plants, animals, gems, colors... They were wonderfully individual. ~Michelle & Julie







# WIMBERLEY Montessori SCHOOL



## Upper Elementary Classroom:

The Upper Elementary students have been busy. The following are some of the October highlights:

**Math and Language-** Our math curriculum includes individual and group lessons in Saxon, Spectrum Math, Geometry, and Hands on Equations. Wordly Wise continues as our core language work with Melanie adding supplemental grammar and creative writing to engage the senses. We are blown away by the creativity, thoughtfulness, and growth we observe.

· **Geography-** We reviewed the study of plate tectonics and the types of faults they cause. Catherine presented lessons on the layers of the earth and the different types of volcanoes. We studied the rock cycle. We explored the passage of time and created a simulation of igneous, sedimentary, and metamorphic rock with crayon shavings. Our field trip to the Gem and Mineral show in Austin was a great success. The children impressed many of the vendors with their curiosity and in depth knowledge of rocks and minerals.

· **Science-** We are beginning our unit on the human body with the life sized skeleton “Indiana Bones” and a collection of labels to help us learn to name



# WIMBERLEY Montessori SCHOOL

some of the most important bones in the body. This will segue into the study of body systems and an engaging hands-on project.

- Reading- Each day we enjoy a silent reading period after recess. The students choose a novel from home or from our collection for independent reading. They create and present book reports on those books as well as our read aloud.

- Community Service- “The Fig Tree” Our first community service project was a walk to the Presbyterian Church just down the street where we helped unload, unpack, and organize packaged foods to be shared with less fortunate local families. The children loved the experience and we are looking forward to returning next month.

- Garden- The fall garden is looking great. The “Garden Club” has prepared the beds, and will be planting vegetable seeds, herbs, flowers, and strawberries. Many thanks to the parent volunteers for help and contributions.

- Friday November, 1st  
- Ghosts of the Past and “Muffin Morning”. Beginning at 8:00 am we hosted another yummy fundraiser, this time with muffins and coffee. Parents stopped in to see our Ghosts of the Past “nichos” on display in the classroom. At 9:30, after Simple Gifts, the children presented their “Ghost” to the community. It was great to have parents

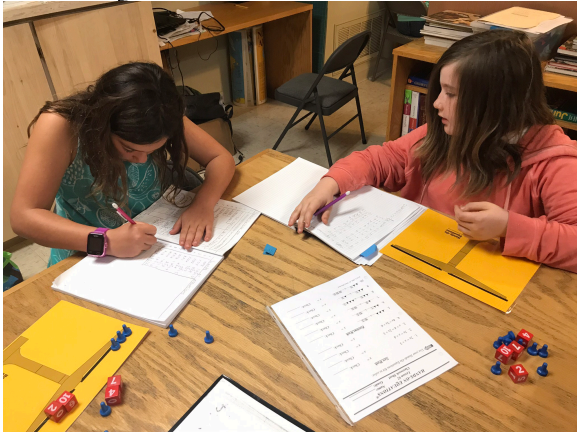
stay for this fun event. ~Catherine & Melanie







# WIMBERLEY Montessori SCHOOL



## **Afternoon Enrichment:**

**What a beautiful time of year! We have enjoyed breathing in the fresh crisp air and having plentiful sunshine to enjoy during Afternoon Enrichment. Even the rainy days are celebrated because we all know the important need being met. I have enjoyed watching and listening to the various age groups interacting. Afternoon Enrichment provides a special opportunity for all ages to be together. This year I have many creative students ready for the project of the day as soon as snack time is done.**

**Our projects for September and October have included themes about leaves, pumpkins, and spiders. It's always a treat to see the unique ways each student interprets and then interacts with the materials for the projects.**

**Currently we are using egg cartons to create a miniature pumpkin patch! It was tempting to pull out projects with snowflakes after this last cold spell! Moving into November we will focus our attention on creating a heart that is full of gratitude all year long!**





WIMBERLEY  
**Montessori**  
SCHOOL

As always, I'm grateful for the opportunity to guide your children in the afternoon at Wimberley Montessori. Thank you.

With Joy,  
Miss Julie



## Music Class:

Hello Parents!  
I would like to introduce myself to you all since I have the pleasure of teaching music to your children every Friday. My

name is Jennifer Zavaleta and I've been a Wimberley resident since 2008. My husband and I moved from south Austin when our daughter was only two years old. She is now a freshman in high school, how time flies! Last year we welcomed our 2nd child to our family and he is now



WIMBERLEY  
**Montessori**  
SCHOOL

almost one! We also have 3 dogs, a cat and some fish. :)

My musical background started when I was a child, singing in church, then later in my college years, I continued singing in coffee shops and bars. When I moved to Austin in 2000, I learned guitar and joined many different bands over the years. I am not playing gigs much anymore, but I still write and hope to record more music in the future. I have a couple of albums floating around out there, one under Jennifer Zavaleta called Prisoner of Love (alt-jazz covers album), and one under Jen Zava called Power to Change (original songs I wrote).

In music class, we have been working on basic musical concepts thus far, such as keeping a steady beat, feeling the music in your body, tapping feet, clapping hands, and playing rhythm instruments like drums and sticks. Some of the kids have great rhythm! We've also tapped into music theory a little by creating and reading rhythm patterns consisting of whole, half, quarter and eighth notes and rests. It is fantastic that so many students already have a solid foundation of music thanks to Miss Sarah's hard work over the last 12 years. Music is a life giver and science has shown time and again the benefits of music on the brain and spirit. Lower Elementary has been working on the song, New Soul, by Yael Naim and we plan to present that during Simple Gifts soon! We may even add it into our Christmas production alongside our Christmas tunes. I've taken requests from the children for our Christmas song list and so far we have, Last Christmas

(Wham!), Let It Snow, The Grinch, Deck the Halls, Santa Claus is Coming to Town, and The Twelve Days of Christmas. It's going to be here before we know it and it's going to be so fun! Upper Elementary worked on a songwriting project in small groups during the month of October. A couple of really cool songs were born! We will continue this work through the next few months, adding guitar and rhythm (maybe bass and piano) so the students can perform their works. I based the project off of John Lennon's song, Imagine. We listened to and discussed the elements of Lennon's song, the rhyme

scheme, the meaning, etc., then the students wrote their songs. It was exciting to see their imagination and teamwork. Since I am only here once a week I don't see many of you, but I look forward to meeting you all over the course of the year! If you ever have any questions, please feel free to schedule a meeting with me on Fridays between 10:30 and 12:30. Best Wishes,  
Jennifer Zavaleta  
512-289-9003

### **Sarah McSweeney:**

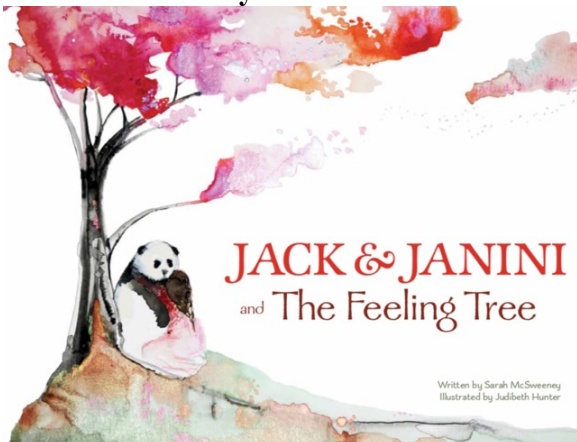
Hi parents and students, Sarah McSweeney here, one of the music teachers at Wimberley Montessori school. I'm so excited to announce that "Jack and Janini and the Feeling Tree" is now available in print! For those of you that don't know the background, the idea for the story began more than a year ago when I was teaching a class with students





# WIMBERLEY Montessori SCHOOL

at the Wimberley Montessori School (you can read more at [www.thefeelingtree.com](http://www.thefeelingtree.com)) The next step was finding an artist to bring the story to life which Judibeth Hunter (a WM parent) did so magically with her breathtaking artwork. The book wouldn't exist without Allison Lockett's phenomenal graphic design and tech support. To help make this dream a reality we had a fundraiser, meetings with book experts and with everyone's support it's now a reality. Thank you everyone who helped make our book dreams come true! Visit [www.thefeelingtree.com](http://www.thefeelingtree.com) to learn more and download a free song composed and performed by Taesha and Sarah McSweeney.



They even felt the same feelings.



They went everywhere together.





WIMBERLEY  
**Montessori**  
SCHOOL

## Director News:

I want to say what an absolutely beautiful job the Upper Elementary children did on their Dia de Los Muertos projects and presentations. I was so impressed by their public speaking skills this year. Speaking in front of a group is a necessary skill to learn but can often be a rather painful part of our school experience as we grow up. I was so proud of them and felt so happy for each of them as they channeled their nervous energy into fantastic presentations! Well done Upper Elementary children and teachers.

Every year we participate in the Emily Anne Theatre Trail of Lights over the Christmas Holidays. For the past two years we have had the tremendous gift of the Ober-Dunham family designing and creating the display for us! This year we will be taking on Jennifer Ober's idea of tying climate change awareness into our traditional message of Peace Begins With Me. We are creating a display that will bring awareness to the fact that our choices as consumers make an impact on our sea life. Our display will be made using all recycled materials from the recycling we generate at the school. It is mostly plastic products that are destroying the ecosystems of our oceans. Each of our classes is working on a part of the display and it will be assembled on the weekend following our Thanksgiving Potluck. Our display will include a donation box to a non-profit organization that works to rescue sea turtles. For inspiration we watched the short video called "The Making of Turtle Ocean". I encourage you all to watch it, as well, as it is very moving and will give you a better idea of what we are attempting to do. [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=E4V\\_RZ-p9-Y](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=E4V_RZ-p9-Y)

This year for our Annual Thanksgiving Potluck will include festive activities such as face painting, fun games, art projects, and live music brought to you from a few of our WMS families. If any of you would like to help with an activity please email me @ [vera.wimberleymontessori@gmail.com](mailto:vera.wimberleymontessori@gmail.com). We are really looking forward to this special time when our WMS families can get to know one another better.

This week we will be moving our driveway! This is a project I have wanted to do for a long time in order to open up more space to develop our school and most importantly to keep our children safer by moving the driveway away from our entrances. We will be closing off our current entrance and creating a smaller half circle drive by our totem poles. We will create parking spaces on the left side of the new driveway for those of you who would like to park for drop off and pick up. You will not have to cross the flow of traffic. Our staff will continue parking where they currently park. I will send an email and Remind notification to prepare you all for the big day! We ask for your patience as we work through our new driveway system and I hope it won't take long for it to become our new and improved normal. A very special thank you to Jaden's grandpa, Ian, who has volunteer to do this for us. We are extremely grateful to you Ian.

I want to include a little extra information about our music teacher, Jennifer Zavaleta. She says:



WIMBERLEY  
**Montessori**  
SCHOOL

“About 2 years ago, I began, Open Space, a yoga and music studio on FM 2325. At Open Space, I have two amazing musicians in who teach banjo, fiddle/violin, guitar, Mandolin, and ukulele. We also offer vocal performance lessons, and, yoga classes. Additionally, we host house concerts and various other events throughout the year there. In fact, one of our parents, Larrissa Rook, has performed two shows there! Check out her music online! Another one of our parents, Soorya Prakash Kaur, teaches yoga at the studio and is fabulous.

In addition to Open Space, I have a radio show on our local radio station, called Women Who Rock Texas. You can tune in every Tuesday night from 6-8 pm! Sometimes I have guests on the show, and I am currently planning the first annual Women Who Rock Texas fest scheduled for March 8th 2020, on International Women’s Day. This idea has been brewing for a few years, so I’m excited to bring it to life.”~Jennifer

### Upcoming Events:

**Wednesday, November 6<sup>th</sup>:**  
*Vision Screening with the Lion’s Club @ 9:30am. Permission slip required.*

**Friday, November 22nd:**  
*Thanksgiving Potluck and Autumn Celebration @ 11:00am*  
*Staff Development Day*

**Monday-Friday, November 25<sup>th</sup>-29th:**  
*Thanksgiving Holiday*

*If you could only sense how important you are to the lives of those you meet: how important you can be to the people you may never even dream of. There is something of yourself that you leave at every meeting*

*with another person. ~Fred Rogers*

