THANKS FOR A GREAT YEAR!

This year's drama performance, put on by the Elementary students at Forest Bluff School, is one of our original "operettas," first performed by our students in 1997. Our plays are written for us, and many of them are based on the Great Lessons we present as part of Cosmic Education (Dr. Montessori's name for the Elementary curriculum).

The children have their scripts and have already been learning the songs and dances they will perform on June 9. The show will be the culmination of their Drama Week, five days spent at Gorton Community Center with a Director, Stage Manager, Choreographer, and Pianist, rehearsing the play and learning the world of theatre.

You are welcome to come see the performance and bring your children ages 5 and up. It's a great opportunity for the oldest Primary students to see what it's all about before they are a part of it themselves. Tickets are on sale in the School Office for $20 each and may be picked up in the office May 30-June 2 or on the night of the performance at Gorton. Thank you for your support!

SUMMER SESSION 2023

Forest Bluff School's Summer Session begins as soon as school is over. These weeks offer consistency to children in a relaxed setting, with plenty of opportunities to be outdoors! Primary children experience a continuation of the school year, while Elementary children learn about a specific topic with their peers. Summer session provides your children the opportunity to continue their development in the prepared Montessori environment. YCC and Primary Summer Session begins June 5, while Elementary begins June 12.

"Face on the Rock" Preparation Has Begun

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WE HOPE TO SEE YOU ALL AT OUR ANNUAL FAMILY BEACH PICNIC!
SATURDAY, JUNE 3, 11 AM - 1 PM
Please RSVP to the school office by May 19.
As our prairie grows rapidly this spring, the children are finding great joy working to maintain it. On Monday, our Head of School, Ms. Earls, gave the Upper Elementary class a presentation on the nature of, and reason for, having a prairie at Forest Bluff School. They learned that a tallgrass prairie is made of native plants that existed in Illinois before European settlers arrived. Illinois’s nickname is "The Prairie State" because 60% of it was originally covered in tallgrass prairie. The students were surprised to learn that only 0.01% of native Illinois prairie remains.

In the discussion, the children shared the types of plants they already knew about, that grow in our prairie, such as big bluestem grass, purple coneflower, brown-eyed Susan, compass plant, bee balm, and Canadian goldenrod. They talked about the reasons we burn our prairie every couple of years, and how having a prairie here fosters environmental responsibility and acts as an extension of their classroom.

The students were excited to think about all the ways they could learn from the prairie: science investigations in botany and zoology based in their lessons on Kingdom Vegetalia and Kingdom Animalia; the history of the prairie and pioneer life on it in the 1800s; writing poetry inspired by the land and learning vocabulary specific to it; and drawing and painting specimens from the prairie.

Then, they talked about the things we don’t want in our prairie, such as bindweed, anything woody, teasel, and dandelions (did you know the word comes from the French "dents de lion," or lion’s teeth, because of the shape of the leaves?).

The 9-12 students were then given the opportunity to volunteer to work in the prairie, and almost the entire class signed up!

The next day, they began clearing out the woody and straw-stemmed dead plants, pulling the weeds from the pathways, and removing any invasive species we don’t want harming the new plants that are growing. Things overheard: "Could we stay and continue working during our playtime?" and "I want to do this work at home... I guess I’ll need to plant a prairie there!" Another group appeared the next day, measuring and plotting the entire prairie. The result came just a day later: a map of the prairie, with all the plants growing there marked and labelled. When asked how they figured out what each plant was, they answered, "We used the Kingdom Vegetalia classification material, and if we couldn’t figure out the name of the plant in English, we just wrote its Latin name. And we're labelling this map 'Spring,' and we'll do it again in the fall to see how the prairie has changed!"

The joy a Montessori child finds in nature is blissful and interminable. As Alexander Pope wrote about nature: "Where order in variety we see, and where, though all things differ, all agree."

"Education is a natural process carried out by the child and is not acquired by listening to words, but by experiences in the environment."

- DR. MARIA MONTESSORI