



Leonardo Da Vinci Academy

100 Allanhurst Drive, Toronto, Ontario M9A 4K4

EXCEPTIONAL SCHOOLING FOR THE FORMATIVE YEARS
FOUNDED 1983
WWW.LDVA.ON.CA

LDVA NEWS

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LDVA CHRISTMAS CONCERT

The 2014 LDVA Christmas Concert will be held in the gym on Thursday, December 18 at 4:30 pm. Students from Preschool to Grade 7 will come together to delight parents and family members with performances in the spirit of Christmas. It is the perfect way to celebrate the upcoming Christmas Holidays which begin the next day !



LEONARDO'S CHALLENGE



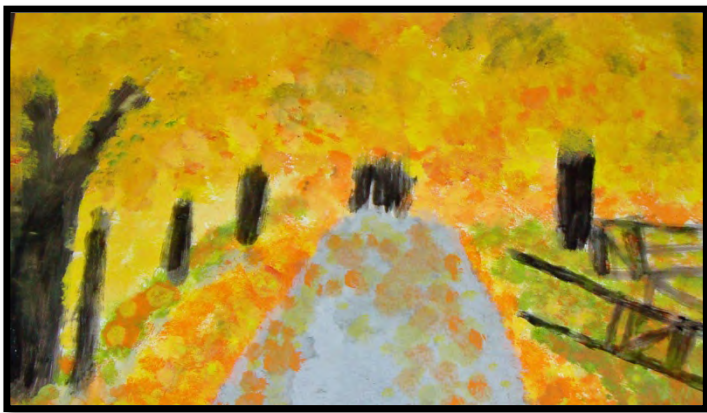
November's Leonardo's Challenge, "Birthday Line-up", was hosted by Mrs. Lee. Students in Grades 1 to 7 were asked to line up along the perimeter of the gym in order of their birthdays; month and day. The challenge was to do this without talking !



At first this challenge presented itself as *Sfumato*, but the older students quickly took charge and began to work in small groups resorting to sign language and nudging other students into place. It was the quietest Leonardo's Challenge we have ever had. When asked to reflect on the what other Da Vincian Principles were used in meeting this challenge students quickly identified *curiosità*, *dimonstrazione*, and *sensazione*.

LEFT: Student practicing his writing
in the Montessori Classroom





ABOVE: WORKS FROM MRS. BARBA'S GRADE 4 ART CLASS

MISSISSAUGA LIVING ARTS CENTRE

On December 8 students in Grades 1-7 visited the Mississauga Living Arts Centre. Students were busy making ceramic snowmen (LEM) or designing their own clay masks (Grades 4-7). We look forward to the pictures of the finished works in our next newsletter.

PYJAMAS & PANCAKES

Mrs. Lee

Wednesday, December 17 is PJs and Pancakes Day. Students are invited to arrive to school in their PJs and stay in them all day. Pancakes and hot chocolate will be served around 9:00 am.

ROSSANA MAGNOTTA VISITS LDVA

On December 15, our school was visited by Rossana Magnotta - the last recipient of LDVA's prestigious *Governors' Award*. Mrs. Magnotta delivered a powerful Christmas message of love and giving to the children and she read "*The Giving Tree*" to the LEM class. She also brought each child a traditional Italian Christmas treat.

MESSY HANDS



On December 3rd our Lower Elementary Montessori class (LEM) was treated to a complimentary creative art workshop by *Messy Hands*. As pictured above, Mrs. Lobo and her students had great fun creating their 3-D Christmas trees.



SCUOLA MATERNA NEWS

Signora S. Ursino/Signora M. Ricciuti



Dopo aver completato la programmazione per il mese di novembre, i bambini della Scuola Materna Montessori, si accingono alla preparazione del periodo natalizio, completando tutte le attività che questo mese comporta, incluso il Concerto di Natale. In occasione di questo evento i bambini creano un'atmosfera natalizia attraverso l'apprendimento di canzoncine e poesie tradizionali, questo arricchisce sia la lingua che la cultura italiana.

12 dicembre, visita alla biblioteca alle 22:30, (solo i bambini del programma pomeridiano).

17 dicembre, una giornata speciale, "PigiamaDay"; i bambini verranno a scuola con un comodo pigiama, che li terrà caldi nel mangiare "Pancakes" la mattina e pizza a pranzo, entrando ancora di più l'atmosfera natalizia.

Una data importante, il Concerto di Natale: giovedì il 18 di dicembre alle ore 16:30 (4:30 p.m.). Questo sarà l'ultimo giorno di scuola per il 2014, le lezioni riprenderanno lunedì il 5 di gennaio 2015.

Venerdì il 19 di dicembre gli insegnanti avranno un aggiornamento professionale e quindi non ci sarà scuola.

**CASA MONTESSORI NEWS**

Ms. B. Cameron/Ms. J. Rutherford



The holiday season is upon us and the children have been busy preparing for the Christmas concert and decorating their treats and classroom. We have also been enjoying some holiday baking and creating some beautiful Christmas tree ornaments.

As we wrap up our holiday shopping it is important to consider what messages and values the gifts and books we choose for our children convey to them. There are many fun options available that also aid in the child's physical and mental development. Children under six years old should have limited access to fantasy toys and books. They are still developing their understanding of how the world works and benefit most from realistic books and toys. A good rule of thumb to follow is: *the younger the child, the more realistic the content.* It can sometimes be difficult to find books that are appropriate for this age group. Some key things to look for: stories that are realistic (limit talking animals, superheroes and princesses, etc.), and stories with a positive message and tone (avoid sarcasm). It's also good to include stories about children from other cultures.

Parents who missed the last Parent Education Workshop, are invited to contact us for a copy of the "Recommended Books" list that was distributed. The next workshop will be on February 26th at 6:30 pm. The focus will be on key concepts of the Montessori approach to Mathematics.

Please remember that all items sent to school should be labelled with your child's name on it. There are many children with identical garments and labelling their clothing will help to keep their things from being lost. Please provide an extra pair of socks as well as *waterproof* outdoor clothes (snowpants, mittens, etc.).



LAPA NEWS

The LAPA Executive Committee would like to wish the LDVA community of families a wonderful Christmas Holiday. The Committee would also like to take this opportunity to thank parents for their ongoing support for our school and initiatives.

Again this year the LAPA Committee is organizing an exciting "Parents' Night Out" for the parents of LDVA. Please save the date of January 30th on your calendar. This 'Night Out' promises to be an evening of fun and culinary delights. It will take place at the Cirillo's Culinary Academy (at 4894 Dundas St. W.) The goal is to bring the parents of LDVA together for a lovely social event with lots of delicious food stations set in a local culinary and casual atmosphere. LAPA will start selling tickets after the holiday break. All parents are invited.

SNOW DAY POLICY NOTICE

In the event that classes need to be cancelled due to a snow storm warning, when possible, the following procedure will be followed: the day before the storm warning parents will be informed that an email will be sent out by 7:00 am on the day of the closure. If in doubt parents are invited to call the school or send an email to Mrs. Lee at sl@ldva.on.ca before heading out to school. Parents requesting phone notification are asked to inform Mrs. Lee.

NEW LDVA WEB SITE

Over the past few months Mr. Ritacca has been busy working with a talented web site designer to refurbish LDVA's web site. We are looking forward to having it uploaded soon. Be sure to check out the new and improved features of www.ldva.on.ca !



MONTESSORI EDUCATION

S. Ritacca

A University study found that a disproportionately large number of very successful entrepreneurs are Montessori alumni. Montessori education has played a significant role in the lives of many successful individuals. These include well known people like: Julia Child, Anne Frank, Wikipedia founder Jimmy Wales, Amazon founder Jeff Bezos, and Google founders Larry Page, and Sergei Brin. There is evidence to show that Montessori students often develop better executive function, problem solving skills, critical thinking skills, better reading and math skills, and are more prepared for elementary school than non-Montessori students. Over the years, Montessori has enjoyed a number of famous advocates such as Alexander Graham Bell, Erik Erikson, Jean Piaget, and David Elkind (who visited LDVA several years ago). The proof of the Montessori methodology, when properly employed, is seen in the calm, joyful expressions of the faces of the children as they develop a life-long love of learning.

As part of a Parent Workshop series to help parents understand key elements of the Montessori philosophy, LDVA Casa Directresses, Jill Rutherford and Brittany Cameron have produced a DVD titled "Encouraging Independence". In the video one can observe deeply focused LDVA preschool children actively doing for themselves with confidence, pride and ownership - characteristics of an excellent learning environment.

Though there is an increasing body of research from around the world that validates Montessori methodology the 'Montessori' label is often usurped and misrepresented. Since there is no formal licensing of the Montessori brand, the name is sometimes associated with childcare centres that would cause Maria Montessori to roll over in her grave. When selecting a Montessori school, parents are well advised to do a thorough research especially since the Montessori movement has also been politicized by certain factions and used to promote an elitism that betrays the teachings of its founder. By marrying the Montessori methodology to the Da Vincian Principles, Leonardo Da Vinci Academy has found the perfect balance that is true to the teachings of Maria Montessori and to the stated mission of the Academy.

The staff at LDVA would like wish all our families a very happy and safe Christmas Holiday. We look forward to seeing everyone back in school in the

New Year on January 5, 2015.