



LDVA NEWS

January/February 2015

ONTARIO SCIENCE CENTRE



On January 12th, Grades 1-7 students visited the Ontario Science Centre. The students participated in various grade appropriate workshops that were an extension of their Ontario Curriculum work they studied in class. Students were also treated to the IMAX film "Island of Lemurs". The excursion served as an enriching opportunity to practice "Thinking Like Leonardo".

LEONARDO'S CHALLENGE



Our Leonardo's challenge for January was hosted by Mme. Gologota and Mrs. Lobo. The highlight of the challenge was, "The Sounds in French". All the Elementary students participated, within mixed age groups. The children were given several popsicle sticks bearing different French words. They were requested to categorize them into the different sounds that they represented. Once they were able to accomplish this task, they were further instructed to write a short story with the words they had been given. Each group of students then shared what they had written. At the end of the challenge they were asked what *Da Vincian Principles*, they had used while working on their tasks. The children did well relating their experience with the various principles.



STUDENT REPORTS

S. Ritacca

Term 1 Reports were issued on January 30. When reviewing these with children parents are reminded to focus on behaviour, attitude, and effort. Focusing on marks at this age could not only impact negatively on self-esteem but may promote short-term thinking and negative behaviour. Parents are encouraged to engage their child in a self-evaluation of their progress and achievements. Reports are useful if they help parents and children identify areas of strength and weakness; help students learn from mistakes; foster strategies for learning; and promote self-confidence. They are NOT a valid measure of worth or intelligence.

During the formative years, Student Reports should be viewed mainly as an evaluation of the learning process. If used exclusively as a measure of student ability, Reports can actually be detrimental to learning. Using marks to motivate students is extrinsic motivation which is counter-productive to the kind of lifelong learning promoted by LDVA. The old carrot-and-stick idea of external rewards (extrinsic motivation) does not promote the development of creative and analytic skills. The best motivation for lifelong learning comes from within (intrinsic) and has three elements: **autonomy, mastery and purpose**. These are key elements of "Thinking Like Leonardo" and Montessori philosophies. Placing the focus on learning rather than on marks helps to nurture children's intrinsic motivation and best prepares them for the future.

Below and Left: Students enjoying the January Challenge



LDVA FAMILY CHALLENGE



Again this year, February's Leonardo's Challenge will be a family challenge. Each family is challenged to create a sock puppet that looks like the student! *Family Day Holiday*, February 16, is the perfect day to work on this challenge. Students are asked to bring their puppet to school on Tuesday, February 17th.

CENTENNIAL PARK SKI TRIP

Weather permitting students at LDVA will be "hitting the slopes" for a day of winter fun. Plans are in place for our elementary students and our Casa and Scuola graduates to visit Centennial Park on Monday, February 23 for a day of downhill skiing. The ski trip consists of a lesson in the morning and a chance to practice *corporalità* after lunch. Parents are welcome to meet us there.

ST. VALENTINE'S DAY

February 13 is *St. Valentine's Casual Dress Day* at LDVA. Students will celebrate the occasion by wearing tops with red, white, pink, or purple. Students are also invited to bring *Valentine Cards* to their classrooms to hand out. (Please remember that it is just cards - no toys, pencils, sweets or other items).



ASH WEDNESDAY

An *Ash Wednesday Ceremony* will be held in the gym on Wednesday, February 18 at 10:50 am. Parents are welcome to attend. As is the tradition, at the end of the ceremony Mr. Ritacca will administer the symbolic ashes to students, parents, and staff who come forward.



Above and Right: Casa children at the Ontario Science Centre

MARCH BREAK

This year March Break is from Monday, March 16 to Friday, March 27. A Camp for **Preschool to Grade 1** children is being offered during the week of March 23.

MARCH BREAK CAMP 2015
@ Leonardo Da Vinci Academy
 Monday, March 23 - Friday, March 27
Preschool to Grade 1

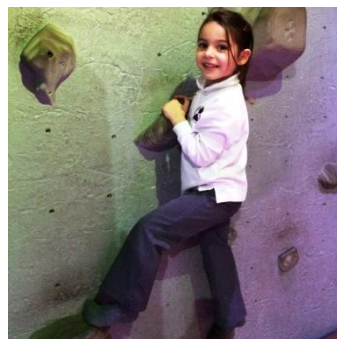
As spaces are limited, please submit registration forms to Mrs. Lee by **February 27** to reserve your space for this week of fun. Activities include crafts, singing, outdoor play, and other special events. See Mrs. Lee for details.

CLAY MASKS BY GRADE FOUR CLASS



SERATA ITALIANA

On the evening of March 12, LDVA elementary students and the Italian and Music teachers will be presenting a concert of Italian song, music, and dance. Parents and family members are invited to join the staff and students for an evening of "Italian Festivities". *Serata* is always entertaining, be sure to mark your calendar!



SCUOLA MATERNA NEWS Ursino/Ricciuti

I bambini della Scuola Materna hanno completato e assimilato il programma del mese di gennaio, e hanno iniziato febbraio con notevole interesse e continuano ad esplorare le varie aree Montessoriane. Questo periodo è stato pieno di eventi che hanno dato la possibilità ai bambini di approfondire l'apprendimento linguistico e culturale. Il programma è ricco di temi didattici che si stanno svolgendo seguendo le varie tappe Montessoriane, evidenziando soprattutto la matematica, la lingua e la cultura. Eventi di gennaio e febbraio:

29 gennaio - **Festa dei nonni**: i bambini hanno espresso il loro affetto verso i nonni attraverso canzoncine e poesie, conclusa poi con un rinfresco

30 gennaio - I genitori hanno ricevuto la pagella dei figli dove dettagliatamente viene comunicato il miglioramento ottenuto; chi desidera avere un colloquio con le maestre potrà farlo tramite appuntamento.

13 febbraio - **San Valentino**; in questo giorno i bambini potranno vestirsi di rosso, rosa e bianco e quindi niente grembiolino e potranno portare bigliettini per gli amici (ma senza regalini o cioccolatini di nessun genere).

16 febbraio - **Family day**; giornata dedicata alla famiglia quindi niente scuola.

17 febbraio - **Il carnevale**; seguendo la tradizione italiana la Scuola Materna festeggia il Carnevale, quindi i bambini dovrebbero venire in costume.


18 febbraio - **Ash Wednesday**; tutti in palestra per il mercoledì delle ceneri.

Si ricorda, inoltre che il **March Break** sarà dal 16 marzo al 27 marzo.

Si prega i genitori che per qualsiasi comunicazione possono mandare un email a: scuola@ldva.in.ca

**CASA MONTESSORI NEWS** Rutherford/Cameron

The Casa children began their New Year back at school invigorated and ready to resume their classroom routines. They were especially excited about rehearsing for the annual *Festa dei Nonni* celebration. The grandparents were thrilled to see their grandchildren perform on stage singing songs and reciting poems. This was followed with a classroom reception. In January, Miss Cameron and the Casa graduates joined the elementary students at the Ontario Science Centre for an informative and fun day!

We look forward to seeing everyone dressed in their Valentine's Day colours on February 13th. The Casa students will bake some delicious  **Valentine** treats to take home for their families. Baking has become a valuable addition to our Practical Life area. The



children enjoy all the benefits of baking! Baking encompasses several areas of the curriculum such as reading, measurement, culture and their senses.

Some upcoming events to note: casual dress **Valentine's Day** February 13th, **Family Day Holiday** February 16th, Casa graduates will be joining the elementary students for a **Ski Day at Centennial Park** February 23. Parents are invited to arrange a date and time to come visit their child's class for an observation. **Observations with your child** will be approximately 30 minutes and will take place at 9am or 1pm. Please contact your child's teacher to schedule your observation.

Our third parent workshop '*The Montessori Approach to Math*' will provide parents with an insight into the extensive math curriculum. It will be an informative evening that will include several clips of the Casa children working with mathematical materials throughout the curriculum. Please join us for our **Parent Workshop on February 26th at 6:30pm**. Please RSVP at casa@ldva.on.ca.

LAPA NEWS



On January 30, the LAPA Committee (above) organized a "Parents Night Out". The Parent Social was held at Cirillo's Culinary Academy. Thanks to all the parents that were able to attend. It was a fabulous evening with delicious food, great wine, lovely conversation, and some crazy photos. The night was fun for all, we especially enjoyed the past videos of the children that played on the screen throughout the night. Thank you to Coveted Cakes for donating the yummy cupcakes. The photo booth and Lindt chocolate treats were also donated by one of our LAPA families. We look forward to another successful event next year.



Scuola children on stage on Grandparents Day

PARENTING FOR SUCCESS

S. Ritacca

The importance parents place on test scores, diverts many from parenting children for success. Preparing children for future challenges involves much more than focusing just on high test scores. Such a focus risks generating anxiety, breeds low self-esteem and does not foster the development of the child's true potential. Children whose success is solely defined by performance on tests, will be at a disadvantage in a future that awaits them with real world challenges. The misplaced anxiety of many parents is rooted in a fear of unforeseen outcomes and need for control. Studies show that the effect is to raise a generation of worriers who will tremble like lab mice at the first sign of hardship. Toronto author and parenting coach Jennifer Kolari explains "If you look at this generation of children who've been raised this way, their anxiety is off the scale .. They are a mess." Experts agree that nurturing character development and independence (not high test scores) ultimately leads to better education, higher salary, and more socially fulfilling lives. A focus on developing skills like perseverance, curiosity, independence, learning from mistakes, delayed gratification, and personal responsibility are key to nurturing future success.

*In the book, "How Children Succeed: Grit, Curiosity, and the Hidden Power of Character", author Paul Tough advises, "If we really want (children) to succeed we need to let them fail so they can learn to manage it...Help them stare at failure with unblinking honesty...give them a chance to fall down and get back up **on their own.**" The importance of character development for nurturing success in children is paramount.*

RE-ENROLLMENT FORMS FOR 2015-2016

Re-enrollment forms for the 2015-2016 school year have been sent home as of January 28. Parents are reminded that in order to receive the returning student discount, and/or to insure that a space is reserved for your child, the form must be returned by **February 27** with required payments. **After that date the new tuition will apply.** Please be advised that decisions concerning staffing and programmes for next year are based on students **officially** enrolled at the time.

NEW LDVA WEB SITE

Our new and improved LDVA web site is almost ready and should be online by the end of February. The updated web site will include some exciting new features including a *Picture Gallery*. Be sure to check out www.ldva.on.ca soon.