



LDVA NEWS

SEPTEMBER 2017

LDVA STAFF

Mrs. M. Adamo-Monardo, Junior Casa Assistant
Mrs. A. Barba, Italian, Art, Religion, After Hours
Mrs. S. Cimini Leonzi, Scuola Materna Assistant, Italian
Mr. M. Gillogly, Music Director
Mrs. S. Gravina, Admissions / School Secretary
Mrs. E. Grimaldi, Junior Casa Montessori Directress
Mrs. M. Golgota, French
Mr. T. Jewell, Grades 5/6, Science, Phys. Ed.
Mrs. S. Lee, Academic Head, Grade 4
Mrs. B. Lobo, Lower Elementary Montessori
Ms. C. Marcuz, Lower Elementary Montessori Assistant
Ms. E. Resendes, L.E.M. Assistant, Substitute Teacher
Mrs. M. Ricciuti, Scuola Materna Directress
Ms. G. Ritacca, Senior Casa Montessori Directress
Mrs. Y. Mesbah, Senior Casa Assistant
BURSAR: Mr. J. Cap
FOUNDERS: Mr. S. Ritacca, Mr. D. Tassielli

ARRIVAL & DISMISSAL PROCEDURES

LDVA's 33rd year is off to a great start ! In the interest of safety and security, we ask that parents follow the morning drop off routines as in past years. To help us better control access to the building, parents are discouraged from entering the school without an appointment. Students not enrolled in "Extended-Hours" should arrive no sooner than 8:20 am. The morning bell will ring at 8:40 am to signal the start of the day. For safety reasons doors will be locked after the bell. Children arriving after 8:45 am should be brought to the office and a staff member will escort them to class. For security, students have been instructed to never open doors to people. Parents are requested to comply with established routines and keep our school safe.

Since parents will not be accompanying their children into the classroom, preschool children especially will need help adjusting to this routine. We have had our usual "First Day of School" tears from some of the new preschool children, but most have easily adapted to the new routine. It is great to see how independent and responsible our students can be as they come in to school on their own. Our afternoon dismissal also appears to be running smoothly. The support of parents in implementing these procedures is greatly appreciated.

Parents who wish to speak to a teacher on a given day are invited to write in the student's agenda (elementary students) or email the teacher. Teachers have provided parents their email addresses. This can serve as an effective way to communicate with the teachers without distracting their attention from the students under their care during arrival and dismissal times.

LEONARDO'S CHALLENGES

The *Leonardo's Challenges* are a series of school-wide activities to encourage students to "Think Like Leonardo" and practise the seven *Da Vincian Principles*. (Please refer to the *LDVA Student Handbook* or website for details). Throughout the year, teachers take turns challenging students at all levels to think outside the box by presenting them with a challenge designed to highlight and cultivate one or more of the *Da Vincian Principles*. The first challenge of the year will take place on October 19. Please refer to this year's school *Events Calendar* for other dates scheduled for our "*Leonardo's Challenges*" activities.

CURRICULUM NIGHT

On the evening of September 14th at 7:30 pm parents have an opportunity to meet the 2017-2018 LDVA staff and familiarize themselves with curriculum. Parents will receive Elementary Course Outlines or Preschool Parent Manuals and get an overview of the school's curriculum, programme and educational philosophy. Parents who are not able to attend are invited to pick up the handouts from the office at their convenience.

TERRY FOX RUN

On September 28th at 11 am, students of LDVA will once again pay tribute to Canadian Hero Terry Fox and his annual *Marathon of Hope* by running or walking for cancer research. As in past years, Mr. Jewell will be coordinating the run and pledge forms. The funds raised are donated in the memory of former LDVA staff and students, like Mr. Tim Brown and Nicole Nardi, whose lives were prematurely ended by cancer. Parents are asked to support this Canadian tradition which LDVA has been proud to be an exceptional part of over the years.



Seasons are Forever

Spring was around.
She came from nowhere to fight mean Jack Frost,
To beat him with the beauty of her flowers and trees,
And to let kids play with no worry of dropping a hat or a mitt.
She stayed for a while -
Her flowers that smelled like heaven,
Her trees that gave fresh, cool fruit -
But she had to leave when time was up;
Her time will come again.

by Nicole Nardi (May 1, 1980 - August 8, 1999)

Nicole wrote this poem in 1992 when she was in Grade 6 at LDVA. She died from a rare cancer related disease seven years later. In a parting letter to friends and family she wrote: "Everyone...will have some kind of experience that will prove to them that Life is priceless, don't wait ...start living now. When you go to bed tonight remember how lucky you are to be alive and healthy. Treasure every minute of your life because it can be taken away in a blink of an eye"

EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

On most days, the period from 3:20 pm to 4:00 pm offers a variety of opportunities for elementary grade students to participate in selected activities or receive extra help. This year, after school clubs and activities include: Band, Sports, and Study Hall. *Special Programmes* will also be offered by outside organizations throughout the year. During lunchtime, on certain days, elementary students also participate in Intramural Sports.

Extra-curricular activities are a privilege extended to students meeting their responsibilities. Detentions and academic requirements take priority over extra-curricular activities. The support from parents by picking up their children promptly is much appreciated and helps make these offerings possible. Parents are reminded that students not scheduled in an after school activity should be picked up promptly upon dismissal unless other arrangements have been made (such as Extended Hours). On Staff Meeting days students not enrolled in Extended Hours must be picked up by **3:20 pm** - please refer to the School Calendar for Staff Meeting dates.

SCHOOL PHOTO DAY

Parents are reminded that October 16th is LDVA Picture Day - students are to be in complete **official school uniform** (parents are asked to please refer to the "School Clothing Requirements" form for specifics).



Casa and Scuola students playing during recess

MUSIC

Few areas of the curriculum can promote *Arte/Scienza* or "whole brain thinking" as Music. The study of Music can provide an excellent way to develop the balance between art, logic, and imagination - a core aspect of "Thinking Like Leonardo". For this reason music education is given a high priority at LDVA. Music classes are scheduled throughout the week for all LDVA students, including preschools. At the higher grades the Music curriculum encompasses theory, performance, and music appreciation.

Mr. Gillogly, the Academy's new Music teacher is a graduate of the Royal Conservatory of Music and has served as the Musical Director of various congregations since 1998. He has worked with children to promote a love of music and has been a mentor to numerous young singers and musicians. Since 2009 he has also worked as a vocal coach, and as a teacher of guitar and piano. Under Mr. Gillogly's direction, the goal of the LDVA Music Programme is to continue to inspire a love and appreciation for Music as a unique and joyful form of human expression.

BAND is compulsory for students in Grades 4 to 6. The *Grade 4 Band* meets on Tuesdays and the *Full Band* (Grades 4-6) meets on Thursdays from 3:20 pm to 4 pm.

CHOIR for students in Lower Elementary is held once a week as part of their weekly schedule.



LIBRARY TRIPS

Students will be visiting the local library at different times throughout the year to promote reading. The first trip is on October 17. Please refer to the LDVA School Calendar for the dates of all the scheduled library visits for the year.

Students and parents wishing to renew borrowed library books may do so online at <http://www.tpl.toronto.on.ca/>. Please note that your child's library card number will be required to renew books on line. Students are advised to write their library card number in their planner. Students are responsible to turn in their library books as they enter the library during each visit. See Mrs. Lee for details.



New Senior Casa student exploring the Cylindrical Blocks



SCUOLA MATERNA NEWS Signora M. Ricciuti

Un bentornato a tutti i bambini della Scuola Materna ed un benvenuto ad i nuovi bambini, che dopo le vacanze estive ritornano pieni di entusiasmo e voglia d'imparare, pronti ad esplorare e curiosare nella nostra classe Montessoriana. L'inizio dell'anno scolastico è sempre molto entusiasmante per tutti, ed è per questo motivo che invitiamo i genitori a rassicurare i bambini e prepararli per il nuovo ambiente.

Nella Scuola Materna, si continua a guidare i bambini alla conoscenza e alla scoperta del metodo Montessoriano, dove il bambino è il protagonista della propria educazione. Ma soprattutto ad esporli alla lingua italiana che gradualmente imparano attraverso canzoni, poesie e varie conversazioni. Ricordiamo, inoltre, che per un perfetto e completo svolgimento del programma, l'orario d'entrata è alle ore 8:20, e quello d'uscita alle 15:30; a meno che non si abbia un permesso rilasciato dall'ufficio per "extended hours". E' molto importante vestire i bambini in modo appropriato, cosicché possano essere indipendenti ai servizi igienici, inoltre mettere sempre il nome sui grembiolini, sulle giacche e scarpe.

Lunedì il 16 di ottobre ci sarà il primo "Mostra e Racconta" ("Show & Tell"). Quest'attività, che sarà sempre di lunedì, permette al bambino di acquisire padronanza e spontaneità di espressione nell'apprendimento della lingua italiana. Inizieremo con la prima lettera dell'alfabeto, la 'A', e ricordiamo che l'oggetto che si sceglie da portare deve iniziare con questa lettera ma in italiano (es. A, aereo).

Eventi da ricordare:

"Curriculum night" - giovedì 14 settembre alle ore 19:30; sarà una serata d'incontro tra insegnanti e genitori.

"School Photo Day" - 17 ottobre

Felice anno scolastico a tutti!

CASA MONTESSORI NEWS Mrs. E. Grimaldi

Junior and Senior Casa welcome new and returning students back to school and ready to learn and make new friends. Since some of the younger children have never been away from home some crying and separation anxiety are to be expected. We would like to reassure parents that the tears are temporary and the children will soon be looking forward to coming to school with enthusiasm. We would like to thank parents for helping with the transition by leaving the school promptly after drop-off as this makes it easier for us to calm them down. We also wish to remind parents that during drop-off and pick-up times children need our undivided attention.

With fall approaching, please ensure that your child has the appropriate clothing and uniform. Be sure to label all clothing with your child's name or initials. It is also important to provide your child with complete change of clothes to keep in their cubby in case of personal accidents or water spill since many of the activities in the Practical Life area of the Montessori classroom involve water. The change of clothes does not have to be an official uniform as long as the colours are consistent (grey or navy blue and white shirt).

If you have any questions or concerns throughout the year, please email us at: casa@ldva.on.ca (Junior Casa) or srcasa@ldva.on.ca (Senior Casa). We will be checking emails either before 8:20 am or after 3:30 pm. For time sensitive concerns please call the office at 416 247 6137. Thank you!

We look forward to seeing all Casa parents on *Curriculum Night* on Thursday, September 14th at 7:30 pm. During this time parents will have a chance to see their child's classroom, meet their teachers, review the Parent's Handbook and become familiar with our daily routines. We look forward to another wonderful year.

First week of school in our 2017 Junior Casa Montessori Classroom



Scuola Materna Class - First Day of School

LAPA NEWS

Welcome back to all returning families and a special welcome to the families new to the LDVA Community.

The Leonardo Academy Parents Association or **LAPA**, provides a valuable way for parents to participate in the enrichment of the LDVA experience. Traditional ways LAPA has contributed in the past include: Planning Social Events, Fundraisers, Year-End Picnic, and Parent Workshops. Funds raised independently by LAPA help to subsidize student activities or to sponsor parent workshops. Throughout the year parents will be invited to volunteer for specific events as needed.

PARENTING DEVELOPING BRAINS S. Ritacca

Parents are reminded to make it a priority to monitor and limit the time their children spend with screens and digital devices. These include digital games, TVs, computers, cell phones, and ipads. There is evidence that excessive use will not only have detrimental physical ramifications, but can impact negatively on social skills and brain development. Children who experience too much exposure to TV and computer screens risk becoming **passive learners** and grow to be dependent on external sources for stimulation - they do not learn how to problem-solve or think outside the box. Passive learning is the antithesis to creativity and *"Thinking Like Leonardo"*. Excessive engagement with programmed electronic/digital screens tends to shut down the circuits responsible for **social interaction** and **deductive reasoning** in developing brains. This is especially true for younger children whose brains are at the early stages of development and more vulnerable to manipulation, addiction, and distraction.

Children are natural learners. This can be developed by opportunities for free play and creative analog activities that do NOT involve devices designed to distract and focus their attention on a virtual world. Just as it is counterproductive to over-schedule children's time and over-determine their interests, it is also disruptive to children's development for them to spend too much time in a virtual reality. Time in nature and engagement in analog activities such as dance, sports, music, and the arts will help balance time spent with digital devices and screens and serves to ground the child in the real world.

The role of the parent is one of facilitating the healthy growth of who the child already is and to prepare their child for an unknown future. This cannot be accomplished in isolation but in a culture that encompasses paradox, mystery, ethics, and self-awareness - elements of *"Thinking Like Leonardo"*. Much in keeping with Maria Montessori's teachings, the innate ability of children's curiosity and desire to learn is the key to a child's development. Parents should nurture and encourage these at every opportunity and, at the very least, allow children to develop naturally by lightening up on their own agenda for their child. At the same time we also need to protect our children from being overexposed to an unnatural virtual world.

Though most parents agree that raising children is about love, good parenting is a challenging and delicate balance between allowing freedom to learn, nurturing a healthy growth, and providing meaningful and safe boundaries.



Shown Left:
Senior Casa
students
working with the
Metal Insets
activity



Shown Right:
New Senior Casa
student engaged in
the Boxes and Bottles
activity

