

HEARTWOOD MONTESSORI SCHOOL

Quality Montessori education in the heart of Cary for ages 18 months to 18 years

DATES TO REMEMBER

March 19: Teacher Luncheon

Thank you to the LE2 class for hosting!

March 22: HALF DAY

Noon dismissal for ALL students, followed by **parent-teacher conferences** in the afternoon. (Watch your email for your class's sign-up sheet, or ask your teacher for details.) Sorry, NO childcare is available during conferences. Please plan accordingly.

Toddlers and Children's House release at 11:30am, followed by the rest of the school at 11:45am. (Older siblings release with their younger sibs). All students should be picked up by noon.

March 25: NO SCHOOL

Parent-teacher conferences all day. Sorry, NO childcare is available.



MS-HS Bake Sales TBD

Rain, rain, go away... Watch your email for the return of the Middle & High School bake sales this month!



News From Sue

Reprinted from Sue's email to parents, sent February 18, 2019

It was bound to happen, at some point, that Mary and I would start to think about retirement and that time has begun. We aren't going away anytime soon, but here's the plan:

Mary is ready to transition out of her full-time role soon and I am not ready to fully retire yet but am looking toward stepping down from the director position in another year or so, and maybe even going back into a Heartwood classroom as a teacher once our new director is in place.

We have been working diligently on a plan to ensure that the legacy and heart of Heartwood continues once we retire and are excited to have found someone from within our school who is taking up the mantle.

Lynda Dawson (Children's House teacher) and her husband Jamie are buying the school, and Lynda has committed to carrying the legacy of Heartwood forward so we can continue to serve our students and families with the same founding principles that started the school over 28 years ago. Heartwood will continue to hold respect for each child as a cornerstone of our philosophy and value the strong relationships with our families as integral to what makes Heartwood a special place.

In order to fully reach our retirement goals, Mary and I need to step down both as owners of the business of Heartwood and owners of the land which the school currently leases. The good news for our retirement is that the land has gone up in value; the challenge is that it puts a future lease out of price range for the school to stay at this location for the long term.

We know we will definitely be at our current location through the remainder of this and next school year (2019-2020) and likely the following year too (2020-21). After that a move to NEWER facilities is the

plan. Our goal is to find a convenient location where we can create a new facility in alignment with our Montessori principles to meet the growing needs of our students, families and curriculum.

Changes in the day-to-day for the next school year are minimal. We'll still be right here at 112 Byrum St., I'll continue to be Director for 2019-2020, and Mary will transition to a part-time

consulting role in the office. Lynda will move into an Associate Director position and Ginny will remain as Administrative Coordinator, also known as Rockstar of all things Heartwood.

With Lynda transitioning out of teaching in the Children's House 2 classroom next year we will work with Becki to find a great fit for this role, and Lynda promises to come in to play her guitar and make music with the children on a regular basis.

I am sure you will have many questions, some of which we'll be able to answer and some of which we are still working out ourselves, but we wanted to loop you in as soon as possible and be as transparent as we can during this process.

We are excited about the opportunities this presents for Heartwood and look forward to many great years ahead together.

Ed. note: See page 3 for more details on this transition, including highlights from the Parent Q&A Session that was held on February 26, 2019.



LOOKING AHEAD

April 8 - 12: TESTING (grades 3+)

Students in grade 3 and higher will take the Iowa Basic Skills standardized test, which fulfills our requirement under NC law. (Please plan to be in school if this affects your class!)

You can learn more about our approach to testing on our blog ([Faculty Focus: Standardized Testing and Montessori](#)), by LE team leader Bridget Dickerson).

April 15-22: SPRING BREAK

Classes will resume on Tuesday, 4/23.

May 2: PEP Workout

6:00-7:00pm: FREE workout for all skill levels and physical abilities.

May 4: Spring Fling

3:00-5:00pm. Stay tuned for details!



BULLETIN BOARD

Bowl-a-thon Benefits Nonprofit

Join HW's own Tamara Lapsley the weekend of **March 2-3** at Buffalo Lanes in Cary for a bowl-a-thon benefiting her start-up nonprofit, [Esteamed Coffee](#).

The coffee shop/bakery's mission will be to employ adults with communication, intellectual/developmental, and/or visual disabilities who would otherwise find it difficult to get employment. For those adults still needing speech-language therapy, this will be woven into their work environment and coordinated with the goals of their current speech-language pathologist.

To participate, print the [event flyer](#) and bring it to [Buffaloe Lanes](#) anytime during the weekend of March 2-3.

Club News

Mystery Science

Mystery Science will continue with Upper Elementary & Middle School on Tuesdays (3:15-4:30pm) and Lower Elementary on Thursdays (3:15-4:15pm) until May 21 (UE) and May 16 (LE). Cost is \$165 for the 11-week session or \$15 per drop-in (space permitting), paid by the first meeting. Email [Mr. Jay](#) to register.

Chess Club

Chess Club will return this Fall. Look for details and registration info in our August edition, and check out [Triangle Chess](#) for more opportunities to play.

New PEP Event!

Look for more information on this program in our April edition, but if you don't normally associate exercise with laughing, go ahead and get May 2, 2019 on your calendar.

Marisa Park, HW parent (LE1) and [certified personal trainer](#) for Camp Gladiator, will lead us in a free workout that blends cardio, strength, and stress management with plenty of camaraderie, fun, and yes -- laughter.

Yoga mats optional; we'll meet at 6pm in the Darden House. Older children (ages 7+) are welcome to participate, too!

Stewards of the Planet

Maria Montessori viewed cultivation of a relationship with the natural world as essential to a child's development. But with our environmental treasures increasingly beset by development, climate change, and pollution, what can we do to carry on that mandate?

In February, Lynda got the chance to attend the [NC Green Schools symposium](#) in Raleigh, and she brought home some great ideas for our community as we try to increase our "green quotient" around campus.

The Children's House and Middle School have already started collaborating on a shared goal, exploring ways to shrink our school's trash output and redirect the waste into more sustainable outcomes.

Recently, HW parent Michele Serrano (CH2) gave our Children's House a great lesson on the secret life of worms, then spoke with the Middle School about the art and science of vermiculture composting. After we return from Spring Break, K-6th graders will also get to enjoy a special presentation that focuses on energy use and renewable resources.

As part of this focus, our school is undertaking the My Energy Kit Challenge from Duke Energy, with a goal to save at least 20,000 kilowatt-hours of energy, the equivalent of taking 40 cars off the road for a year.

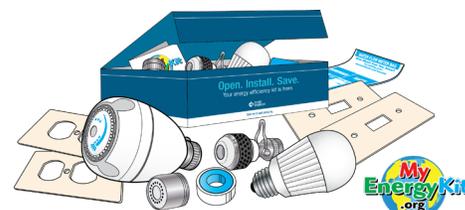
The energy kits contain items like LED bulbs, faucet aerators and other useful gadgets that can make a big difference toward saving energy. If 100 or more families sign up to receive a kit, our school will receive \$250.

Want to get involved? Sign up for a free kit now at [MyEnergyKit.org](#) or call 1-855-386-9548, and please feel free to share the link with anyone else who might be interested.

teaching a child
not to step on a
caterpillar
is as valuable to the
child
as it is to the
caterpillar.

~ Bradley Miller

At Heartwood, our biggest resource is our community. If you love to garden, or if you'd like to help make Heartwood more sustainable, please reach out!



Timelines, Questions and Answers

On February 26, we held an informational meeting and Q&A session as a follow-up to Sue's announcement (see article p.1).

Thanks to all who attended! Your input, feedback, and support are greatly appreciated as we move into this new phase of Heartwood's history.

If you weren't able to attend, please take a minute to look through these highlights of the meeting. If you have more questions, or if you see anything we didn't cover, please feel free to email Sue and set up a time to drop by the office and chat.

Meet the Dawsons

The Dawson family came to Heartwood in 2013, when their oldest daughter started preschool in Ms. Becki's class.

Before Lynda joined the staff in 2017 as the CH2 assistant, she served as room parent and volunteered her skills as a bluegrass musician, performing at the 2016 Family Concert and the 25th Anniversary Silent Auction.

Jamie is also a musician, as well as an entrepreneur and established real estate professional. He owns a real estate firm in downtown Raleigh and a home building and renovation business.

The Meeting in Brief

Sue introduced Lynda and Jamie Dawson, then outlined the timeline of events for this transition to her well-earned retirement before taking questions.

- **2019-20 School Year:** Sue will remain in her current position, Mary will move to a part-time role, and Lynda will join the admin team as Associate Director. Jamie will assist in locating and acquiring a suitable plot of land (and/or existing building) for Heartwood's eventual move.
- **June 2020:** Sue will hand over the reins to Lynda, stepping into a mentor role.
- **2020-21 School Year:** Construction/renovation will create a new facility customized to the needs of Heartwood's staff and student body.
- **Summer 2021:** If all goes according to schedule, our plan is to use this time to transition our classrooms to the new facility.

- **2021-22 School Year:** Again, if all goes to plan, we'll begin this year in our new home!

With Sue and Mary stepping back from the daily routine, who will guide Heartwood?

Lynda is committed to building from within the staff to continue moving Heartwood forward in a way that also honors its legacy.

An advisory team has been assembled to ensure continuity during the transition and afterwards, including Sue, Mary, and Ginny, plus Missy, Ray, Mary McKown, Bridget, and Becki, who bring a wealth of Montessori knowledge and experience at all levels.

Why do we need to move? Can't we renovate here?

In addition to the lease expense issue discussed in Sue's note (front page), we face certain limitations with our Byrum Street location. Zoning is one; age is another.

The main building was built in the 1950s, and it requires progressively more significant repairs as it ages. In order to renovate, we'd need to close the school for at least one school year, which would be prohibitively disruptive and still leave us with issues such as limited class space.

Building a new facility (or customizing one to our needs) will allow us to craft a space that fits our needs and still allows us to grow. On our wish list: indoor multi-purpose space and break-out "specials" rooms, updated classroom environments and bathrooms, a lot that is parking and carpool-friendly, and (most importantly) one convenient to our current location.

What are your priorities for the new property?

Our goal is to stay as close as possible, ideally in a 5-6 mile radius of Byrum Street. The Town of Cary values Heartwood and is actively working with us to identify and acquire suitable property within the town proper, but we are also open to addresses in Morrisville, Apex, or Raleigh if they fall within that 5-6 mile zone.

In addition to the goals above (parking, etc), we are looking for a beautiful, natural campus that will preserve the "muddy

boots" experience we all value.

What kind of growth do you anticipate in coming years?

Our current space is around 12,000 sq. ft., spread across all four class buildings. We'd like our new facility to be at least 15,000 sq. ft., with room to expand if necessary.

That said, we are not interested in losing the intimate feel that makes Heartwood so special.

Currently, we are maxed out -- the natural growth potential from younger siblings and word-of-mouth recommendations is hampered by space constraints. A larger building will allow us to expand our curriculum, better serving our community.

Should we wait to discuss this move with our children?

Yes. The move is at least two school years away -- talking about it now is likely to cause needless anxiety, especially with little ones. Once the new land is acquired, we'll take field trips to explore it and help the children navigate the change.

What will this new facility cost? Will you start a capital campaign to fund it?

We have a budget for the move and the build; once a new property is identified, fundraising is a possibility, but our primary goal is to serve our existing community. That means keeping our costs in line so Heartwood can continue its tradition of quality, affordable education.

How can we help?

Thanks for asking! Here are a few ideas, but feel free to talk to us about others:

- Know somebody who's selling a good plot of land (2-4 acres)? Jamie will be happy to follow up with them.
- Insight on funding opportunities available to us as a for-profit school.
- "Greening" strategies (see article p.2) or involvement with the design of our new campus.
- Most important, share your feedback! We want this process to be a win-win for our whole community. If you have questions, please let us know!

LEARN MORE

[2018-2019 School Calendar](#)

Also available as a PDF on our website

[Our Montessori Philosophy](#)

Or why we do what we do!

FIND US ONLINE

HeartwoodMontessori.com

Our official school website

[Heartwood on Facebook](#)

Our official page on Facebook

[HW Families on Facebook](#)

The unofficial community group for Heartwood families



QUESTIONS?

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CREDITS

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Selected photography

Thanks for Contributing!

Thanks to all who brought in boxtops this month! Ten cents might not seem like much, but it really adds up... so far, we've topped \$180 for the school year.

Missed the deadline? No worries! We'll submit tops again in October, so if you have any that expire AFTER November 1, 2019, feel free to add them to the glass jar on the lobby bookcase and we'll include them in the Fall shipment.



Montessori Kids in "Real Life"

We hear it pretty often. "Montessori's great and all, but what about when they get out in the *real world*?"

Sometimes, it's a concern about transitioning to the desks and workbooks of a [traditional classroom](#). Other times, the person is worrying about how their child will perform in college or the workplace, or just wondering how an unplugged education [fits into](#) a digital world.

Either way, there's plenty of evidence that Montessori kids can do more than fit into the "real world" -- they often [change it](#) in unimaginable ways.

It's not a coincidence that so many of our [most successful entrepreneurs](#) claim some level of Montessori experience. At its core, Montessori is about cultivating self-direction,

self-confidence, and a lifelong love of learning -- a perfect recipe for success.

The philosophy may not have gained national traction until the 1960s, but as far back as the [turn of the century](#), American educators were beginning to spread Maria Montessori's ideas, and innovators were taking note.

Alexander Graham Bell established the [first Montessori-based school](#) in Canada in 1912, and Thomas Edison [was also a fan](#) of the method. More recently, Fred Rogers and Nobel Laureate Gabriel Garcia Marquez lent their support to the movement, to the point that now public and charter Montessori curriculums can be found across the country.

So yes...Montessori kids can do just fine. In fact, they do better than fine.

Yearbook Pre-Orders Underway

Yearbooks are a big deal around here. Just ask any of the children who pore over our archives, delighting in finding their friends' old pictures and practicing their reading skills with the biographies that accompany each one.

Copies of the yearbook can be reserved [online](#) or in the lobby. During Early Bird ordering, your cost is only \$20, but hurry -- the discount ends **Friday, April 26**. Books will be distributed to classes during the last week of school.

Want to get involved? We always need pictures! Just email your favorites to Ginny, and thank you!

