

2025-2026

THE SEED

ANNUAL REPORT



A LETTER FROM THE *Head of School*

This year, I have returned again and again to a profound truth of Montessori education: joy and learning are inseparable. In a fast-paced world, this can feel increasingly difficult to protect, yet Litchfield Montessori School remains a respite for families who want their children to grow in an environment where learning is its own reward.

“The child feels joy when he sees the results of his own efforts.” - Maria Montessori, *The Discovery of the Child*

Each day, our students experience this truth through meaningful work in a carefully prepared environment. They peel eggs, sweep floors, sort and polish objects, and build the Pink Tower and Brown Stair with quiet concentration. They form words with the Moveable Alphabet, study bead chains, and construct forts in the woods. Recently, an Upper Elementary child told me, “It’s really nice to learn something new because you can share the information with others.” In his classroom, that joy has taken the form of studying Fundamental Human Needs, through which elementary students explore how humans across time and culture meet the same essential needs and discover their own place in the human story. Surrounded by orderly classrooms and simple, engaging materials, children choose work that fascinates them, free from devices and distraction.

Because adults play a vital role in protecting this space, we have strengthened our admissions process, deepened our professional development, and expanded parent education this year. As a community, we are committed to limiting media influences that undermine a child’s natural drive to explore, struggle, and discover. These shared choices nurture authentic joy over instant gratification and create the conditions for children to develop resilience, patience, and confidence.

I am deeply grateful to all who helped make our new playground a reality. Designed intentionally to support the work of childhood, it offers more than swings and slides. Its climbing and spinning elements build strength, coordination, and spatial awareness, while its open spaces invite both independent exploration and complex social play. Watching children on this playground, you see them testing their abilities and navigating relationships in ways only unstructured play can provide.

Whether you are new to our Montessori community or have known it for years, this philosophy reveals itself daily, in the materials, the environment, the guides, and most clearly, in our children. They remind us that learning is indeed joyful.

With joy,



Diane Hart
Head of School



A LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE *Board of Trustees*

Dear Litchfield Montessori School Parents,

When my daughter Hadley started at LMS at eighteen months old, the Montessori pedagogy was still new to my wife and me. Although we were both educators, our understanding of Montessori was admittedly surface-level at best. What truly drew us to LMS was its intimate size and the warmth and patience of its YPC Guide. In fact, when we enrolled Hadley, we assumed she would attend for a year or two before transitioning to something more “traditional.” But early in that first year, as she brushed crumbs from the dinner table with a look of determined purpose, I offered to help. She calmly informed me that it was her work, and she intended to finish it herself. It was the first clear sign that the Montessori environment was empowering her with a strong sense of autonomy, pride, and responsibility. Work had a beginning, a middle, and an end, and if that work was worth doing, it should be done well.

A year or two turned into many more. Hadley graduated from LMS, flourished at Rumsey Hall School, and now, as a boarding student at the Berkshire School, she continues to build on the foundation LMS gave her. This year, in a new and highly demanding high school environment, she is thriving, not only socially and emotionally, but academically and artistically. She seeks out opportunities rather than waiting for them, manages her time with confidence, leads with empathy, and advocates for herself when something needs clarity or deeper challenge.

Her teachers frequently comment on her initiative, her organization, her thoughtful contributions in class, and her willingness to pursue excellence in everything she does, from humanities to athletics to the arts. These are the very habits and character traits that Montessori cultivates: independence, accountability, curiosity, kindness, and a deep respect for one’s own work and the work of others.

We remain grateful to LMS for planting and nurturing these seeds of independence and confidence. The educators, classmates, and families around her worked together to help her grow into the young woman she is today.

Sincerely,



Chris Ford
President, Litchfield Montessori School Board of Trustees

Annual Fund Plea – LINDSEY ROTOLO

Dear LMS Community,

My one-and-only child graduated from LMS in 2020. That seems like a long time ago now, but I still remember my little girl confidently delivering her graduation speech like it was yesterday. Perhaps those memories are so clear because I still see that same little girl in the 17-year-old young woman she is today.

We just started the college search process; a de-humanizing experience these days. Numbers are everything, and there is little room for considering the real person behind the applicant. The highlight is that it is a time of reflection. I recently read through all of my daughter’s high school report cards and was struck by the common themes in teacher’s comments over the years ...

“Works diligently, thinks critically and is attentive. Helps classmates work through challenges, is a positive role model and a great community member. A delight to have in class... a joy to teach. Stands out among her peers. Is curious, asks thought provoking questions and is actively engaged. Self-motivated and has positive energy. Encourages others’ participation and works with anyone. Is kind and genuinely loves learning.”

How many of these qualities are directly attributable to her LMS education? A lot! How much time did I waste while she was at LMS worrying about whether Montessori would result in the best outcome for my daughter? A little!



So many parents have regrets when their children go off to college ... would have, could have, should have. Our children were with us for what felt like an eternity and then, POOF, they’re gone – living their own lives, not looking back. It’s more of a parental occupation to take that long glance in the rearview mirror. Did I adequately prepare them? Did they go to the right schools? Did I give them enough access to what truly interested and excited them?

Let me save you the anguish! LMS is the best place for your child, for every child. The quality of the education and the dedication of the faculty and staff are unparalleled in our area. This is the best decision you could possibly make to prepare your child for whatever comes next. Keep your children here through sixth grade, and, if you can, make a considerable donation to the annual fund. Your investment will only enhance what is already a superior educational experience. ■

With gratitude,

Lindsey Rotolo, P ’20 & Trustee



ANNUAL GIVING 2025

FOUNDER’S CIRCLE

Amy & John Ducci	John Merrill
Kathryn Flodquist	Julie & Greg Miller
Heather & Christopher Ford	Marina & Brock Putnam
Anne E. Loyer	Lindsey & Jon Rotolo
Mary & Richard Loyer Memoriam	George Seabourne
	Triford Foundation

COMMUNITY CIRCLE

Sheila & Ronald Caselas	Amanda Veraldi & Brett Robbins
Anne-Marie & David Fenn	Caroline Nastro & Brian Nurenberg
Mary E Kranzlin	
Reto Morosani	

HEAD’S CIRCLE

Maia & Hugh Cahill	Grace & Russ Pratt
Linda Saarnijoki & Rusty Davis	Joann & James Robertson
Linda & Alan Harbec	Leslie Waldron Smith
Dr. Michael Kovalchik III & Susan Vontell	

FRIEND’S CIRCLE

Sarah & Michael Bresson	Margaret & Charles Nastro
Charles Conn & Carol St. Mark	Allyson Rovetto & Maximilian Gomez-Trochez
Lisa Joseph	Helena and Zachary Sweet
John Maxwell	

SUPPORTER’S CIRCLE

Katherine & Mitchell Alibozak	Kate Gnitzcavich	Lauren & John Long	Margaret & Donald Samela
Michelle Augustine	Carmela & Mark Hansen	Heidi & Michael Madow	Jeffrey Schmidt Sr & Lisa Stanco
Lesley Blade	Muriel & Bruce Haynes	Deb Martin	Jenna & Matthew Stockwell
Candace & William Boden	Deborah Helck	Joanne & Frank Marzullo	Danielle & Vincent Sullo
Becky & Gary Bruce	Megan Hychko & Eric Giampietro	Lisa & Ronald Palladino	Emily & Bruce Swomley
Corinna & Jonathan Davies	Dr. Cara & Daniel Johnson	Eva & Tom Pedro	TPC Contracting
Deborah DeGuire	James Kaniewski	Meredith Penfield	Mary Lou & Richard Volpe
Dora & Thomas Durso	Megan & Michael Kowalchick	Michelle and Joseph Pratt	
Elizabeth & Peter Frew	Stephen Lewis	Joyce Rawski	
Linda Garrettson		Sarah & Bryan Robertson	

THE MARY & RICHARD LOYER MEMORIAL PLAYGROUND

Katherine Flodquist

Anne Loyer

**Julie & Greg Miller,
in honor of Tyler
Miller, Class of ‘06**

The Pinette Family

The Alibozak Family
The Ducci Family
Joan & Jim Hartley
NW CT Comm.
Foundation
Edwin M. Stone
& Edith H. Stone
Fund
Lindsey, Jon and
Sadie Rotolo
The Merrill Family
George Seabourne
Seherr-Thoss
Foundations

The Bouffard Family
The Cambrial Family
Betsy & Mark
Johnson
Grace & Russ Pratt
Marina & Brock
Putnam
Joann & James
Robertson
Dave Zamora and The
Samela Family
Stockyard
The Bresson Family
Anne-Marie & David Fenn

Robert Fredrickson
The Frew Family
The Hart Family
Sarah Westby & Devon Hartley
Lisa Joseph
Mary Kranzlin
Margaret & Charles Nastro
Rotary Club of Thomaston
Andreas Rothbauer
The Rovetto Gomez-Trochez Family

Many Hands Create a Joyful Community

“The child watches the working adult and thus comes to understand the community to which he belongs.”
— Maria Montessori, *The Secret of Childhood*



FALL CLEANUP

As part of this year’s Fall Cleanup, families moved mulch, weeded gardens, pruned trees, and revived our Kindness Rock Garden!

PLAYGROUND PREPARATIONS

Thank you to the Alibozak Family and Alibozak Construction for their contribution of site work for the new playground, to Jen Bouffard for contributing her landscape design skills, and to the team of parents and children who came together to bring her design to life. Thank you also to contributions from Manny Cruz who built us a new sandbox and the Watley Family for breathing new life into a beloved set of swings!



Playground Dedication – LINDSEY ROTOLO P'20

This year's Fall Festival was held on a delightfully warm, sunny October day. While the school's beloved tradition always attracts a wide range of current and former families, and longtime friends of the school, this year's event was especially well attended.

The excitement in the air was palpable as the current students endured the final hour leading up to the ribbon cutting ceremony for the new playground. The ceremony began with Diane Hart's appreciative remarks for all involved in the creation of the playground. Sixth year students then shared messages of gratitude and handed out fresh-cut dahlias and handwritten thank you notes to the playground's biggest supporters. One former student, Ann Loyer, and her sister Kathryn Flodquist, also had very specific roles to play in this year's fall festival ... dedicating the new playground in their mother and father's memory.



Ann delivered a lovely speech, beginning by mentioning what a fitting memorial for her mother a playground is because Mary Loyer was such a playful person. Ann closed her speech by saying, *"Thank you for the opportunity to remember them in this way, and create a memorial for them. It's always wonderful to return to this place where the school had just landed in my final year of Montessori, and see it now having grown deep roots, and grown stronger."*

For those not familiar with the school's origins, its founder, Mary Loyer, was first introduced to Montessori in the late 1960s when she was living in Michigan with her husband, Richard, an orthopedic surgeon, and their young daughters. It was the joyfulness of the children in that environment that initially drew her in. She enrolled her older daughter,

Kathryn, in a Montessori school in Michigan and then found Greater Hartford Montessori when they moved to Newington, Conn. Not long after the move to Newington, the Loyers relocated once again to Litchfield, where Kathryn was enrolled at Washington Montessori School.

Mary was never comfortable taking a lot of credit for the school's founding (despite her efforts obtaining the classroom space, recruiting families, hiring teachers, creating the Board of Trustees and writing the by-laws!). She always said that she was just looking to put together a carpool to Washington Montessori School (then housed in the heart of Washington), and it was someone else who suggested they start their own school right in Litchfield.

Mary had the sense there was a lot of support for this idea, but she was still surprised when 40 people showed up for the open house in February of 1972. Mary asked her pastor at St. Michael's Church if they could use a room in the church basement. He agreed, and in September of 1972, eight boys and two girls (one of which was Mary's youngest daughter, Ann) enrolled in the first Children's House classroom of Litchfield Montessori School.

Later that year, Mary received a call from a teacher at Greater Hartford Montessori School who was moving to Litchfield. She wondered if Mary had any interest in starting a lower elementary classroom for older

children. There were plenty of parents interested in their children continuing in Montessori, so the next fall they moved into bigger space at the Education Connection building. The following three years, the school was housed at Daughters of Wisdom (Wisdom House Retreat & Conference Center) until the town approached them about taking over the Northfield Elementary School building.

When they moved into the school's present site, they were finally able to offer an upper elementary classroom. Mary considered her work to be done at that point, but she remained a loyal friend and ardent supporter of the school for the rest of her days.



Ann said, "I can see now, embodied in the school, my mother's desire for me to be whole. In spite of all the bumps and twists of life, this school represents her commitment to that goal (of serving the whole child). She wanted all children to be whole, having access to their full intelligence, able to contribute to life's challenges. I think this school is a living commitment to that goal held not just by my mother, but all the parents here, and who have been here in the past."

Ann also made note in her speech of her father's wisdom in supporting his wife's dedication to building Litchfield Montessori School. Richard Loyer was happy to take off the surgeon's hat and play a supporting role in his wife's important work. Ann and Kathryn are confident that a lead gift to the new playground is the very best way they could honor their parents' legacy. And how grateful this community is to their generosity, and the lasting impact of the Loyer family on Litchfield Montessori School. ■





TAKING THE LEAD

Logan Schmidt, this year's Head of School for the Day, put together a team to help unload pumpkins donated by his grandfather, Jeffrey Schmidt, Sr.



Ratna Singh shares customs of dress from her Indian heritage.



Yajai, from Thai in Love, leads a Thai cooking class.

CULTURAL CONNECTIONS

Inviting parents and community members to share their cultural experiences is a deeply Montessori practice. Children learn best through real connections. Hearing directly from adults and peers about their traditions, foods, clothing, languages, and family stories helps broaden their understanding of the world. These visits nurture curiosity, respect, and a sense of global citizenship, offering our students a living experience of the diversity that enriches our community. Thank you to all the parents and community members who have come in to share their cultural experiences with our children.

BETSY'S FLOURLESS PUMPKIN BROWNIES

Try this recipe for gluten and dairy free brownies. Betsy made them for the Running Club and then the staff asked for their own batch!

INGREDIENTS:

- ¾ cup almond butter
- ¾ cup canned pumpkin puree
- 2 eggs
- ½ cup maple syrup or honey
- 1 tsp vanilla
- ½ cup cocoa powder
- ½ tsp baking soda
- Pinch of salt
- ½ cup chocolate chips

INSTRUCTIONS:

- Preheat the oven to 350F, and prepare an 8x8 baking dish with grease or parchment paper.
- In a large bowl, mix together the almond butter and pumpkin.
- Whisk in the eggs, then add the maple syrup and vanilla.
- Add cocoa powder, baking soda, and salt. Stir until combined.
- Fold in the chocolate chips.
- Pour mixture into pan and bake for 22-25 min. or until a toothpick comes out clean. Different size pans will yield different baking times.



Stephen Coxon shares stories of growing up in England and his career in sports.



Andreas Rothbauer regales us with stories of growing up in Germany.

OUR TRADITIONS:

Festa –GRAIL KEARNEY

Each year, during the final week of our school year, we celebrate and honor Maria Montessori with our very own **Festa Italiana** (Party Italian style!). A longtime LMS tradition, the elementary children eagerly and joyfully participate in all aspects of Festa preparations.

Each child brings a small food item to contribute to the meal, enabling us to create lunch for 50 people. Working together throughout the morning, the

children perform a variety of culinary tasks. For example, they cut and arrange veggies on platters, prep and slice lemons for the Pellegrino mineral water, create our famous Festa fresh tomato, basil, and garlic sauce, and of course, slice lots and lots of bread! With all of this food prep, the alluring and aromatic scent of fresh basil and garlic wafts through the air.

While all of this is happening in the kitchen, many others work to prepare the Great Hall for the meal. Tables are set on colorful tablecloths and topped with lovely wildflower arrangements. The effect of these extra touches is just beautiful. Without a doubt, the work of preparation is fueled by both the love the children feel for their community, and the promise

of a delicious Italian pranzo (lunch!). Finally, at the appointed time, the children, their teachers and special guests come to the table. Festa always includes a choice of spaghetti with pesto, fresh red sauce, or butter. With a joyful, “Buon appetito a tutti” (Good appetite to all!), this tasty and memorable celebration begins. ■



School Play

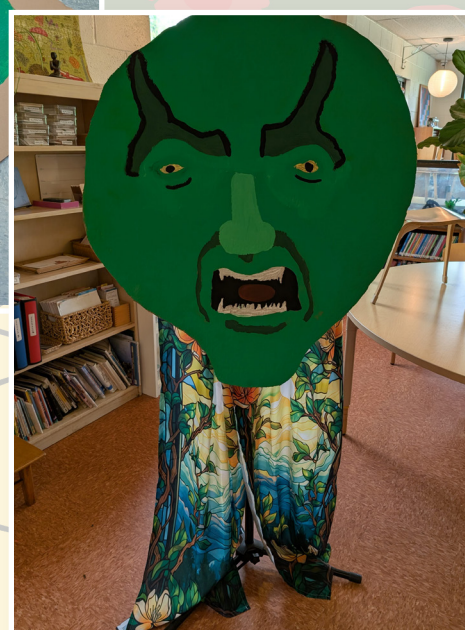
THE WONDERFUL WIZARD OF OZ

THE WIZARD of OZ

This past spring, our elementary students brought *"The Wonderful Wizard of Oz"* to life in another quintessential Litchfield Montessori production, directed once again by Elizabeth Dayton.

The foursome that embarks on the story's intrepid journey proved the perfect fit for our four Sixth Years, who stepped into their roles with confidence, humor, and heart. With imaginative staging, and the unmistakable spirit of collaboration that defines our school, the play captured the curiosity and courage at the heart of this classic story.

We extend our sincere gratitude to the faculty and parents whose time, talent, and support made this year's production possible. Their partnership continues to help our students shine on stage and experience the joy of creating something beautiful together. ■



Field Day 2025

— SAM COCHRANE

This year, our Field Day celebration added a touch of magic with its *Wonderful Wizard of Oz* theme. From the excitement of the bus ride to Boulder Ridge to the lively activities that followed, children embraced the spirit of adventure and cooperation. Following a morning of teamwork activities, led by Sam Cochrane and family volunteers, children enjoyed lunch, zip lines, kayaking, tennis, and swimming. The day offered something for everyone. Field Day continues to be a highlight of the school year, made especially memorable by the joyful participation of our Extended Day and Elementary children and the generous involvement of our families. ■



New York City

— KATE GNITZCAVICH



Over the past several years, each graduating class of students has culminated their LMS experience with one final field trip: the Sixth Year Class Trip. Each group of students has varied experience with being away from home, navigating normal day-to-day practical life skills and being in an unfamiliar place away from family. These factors, along with the students' varied interests and ideas, ultimately led us to choose New York City as the Class of 2025's destination.

New York City is an endless fount of cultural experiences. From museums to parks, restaurants, and monuments, the city has something for everyone. Each student comes away with something different that was their particular favorite experience. Even the act of navigating streets and the subway system is an important and satisfying lesson for older children.

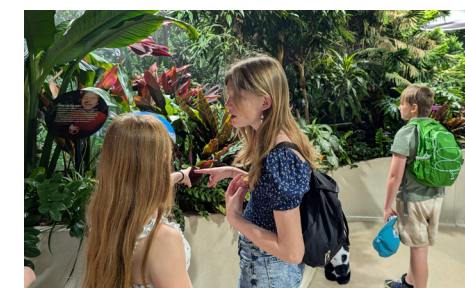
The locations we visited on the trip were Vessel (an interactive art installation), the 9/11 Memorial, the Museum of Natural History, the Hi-Line, Central Park, the Central Park Zoo, the Ice Cream Museum, and Chelsea Market. Our hotel was in the business district, so we were able to visit Battery Park and see the Statue of Liberty.

Taking in a live street performance, student Mia Heller was encouraged by her good friend, Gabriela Ongaro, to join in and demonstrate her gymnastic skills. Logan Fortier became a master navigator of the subway maps, and Ren Sweet, our Asian cuisine connoisseur, discovered some fantastic places to eat. Our students felt both enchanted and comfortable during this trip, appreciating the variety of things tantalizing the senses and settling into the rhythms of the city.

We put a lot of miles on our shoes, but also gave students the lead when navigating from place to place, consulting maps and schedules for subways and trains. By the end of the trip, they were all familiar with the hotel neighborhood and could confidently guide our group back home at the end of each day. Students had important bonding time too, both during our train rides to and from the city and playing card games together. This is also a special part of the Sixth Year Trip – the opportunity to connect, relate, and laugh together as peers and friends.

Each year, a new group, a new adventure.

I treasure these opportunities with my students. The trip is a capstone



event for each group. Looking back, what I love most is seeing how capable they are outside of our school environment, and how much they want to experience the world around them.

"The outing, whose aim is neither purely that of personal hygiene nor that of a practical order, but which makes an experience live, will make the child conscious of realities ... When the child goes out, it is the world itself that offers itself to him. Let us take the child out to show him real things instead of making objects which represent ideas and closing them up in cupboards." -Maria Montessori (1948) ■





Each spring, our Sixth Year graduates take the stage at the Moving On Ceremony to reflect on their time at Litchfield Montessori School. Their speeches offer a window into the experiences, challenges, and moments of joy that shaped their journeys. This year's class shared thoughtful insights, meaningful memories, and the lessons they will carry with them.

Logan Fortier opened with the words of Lao Tzu: *"A journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step."* He recalled the quiet focus he found working with the bead chains in the Great Hall and the satisfaction of breaking large projects into manageable parts, skills he will bring forward into new academic adventures.

Mia Heller embraced the wisdom of Winnie the Pooh: *"We cannot be happy every day, but happy things happen every day."* She reflected on playing Nattie in her Fourth Year production of "Robin Hood," a role she didn't initially want, but grew to love. From this, she learned that even small parts can bring great joy. She also shared that she has learned friendships, no matter the bumps, can always be repaired.

In her two years at LMS, **Gabriela Ongaro** discovered the importance of confidence and kindness, echoing Katherine Gaskin's reminder to "stand tall" and "be sweet on the inside." She



shared warm memories of the Sixth Year trip to New York, the ski program, and the many moments of connection with classmates and teachers.

Ren Sweet closed with Glinda's encouragement from The Wizard of Oz: *"You are capable of more than you know."* Taking on a larger role in this year's school play pushed her to grow, and she met the challenge with determination. Ren spoke fondly of skiing at Mohawk Mountain, unforgettable class trips, and the comfort brought by Shanti, Monika's beloved dog, whose presence made LMS feel like home.

Together, their reflections capture the heart of an LMS education: joy in learning, confidence gained through challenge, and the enduring support of a caring community. ■



The Monstessori Guide – SUSAN DECARLO PATRICK

If the adults in a Montessori environment are in fact teachers, why are they referred to as "guides"? We can answer this in many ways, but the secret lies within the magic of "The Montessori Way."

The guide is a catalyst. They are the knowledgeable and artistic preparers of the environment; the captivating storytellers; the observant magicians who stay present, so they are available to open another human being's eyes to the possibility of learning something they never knew before.



Montessori guides are the scientifically-minded and wise elders, enthusiastic about working with human beings of any age to change the world for the good of all creatures. They are the kind and trustworthy person who is there to keep you safe, while quietly guiding you on your path toward becoming who you are meant to be.

The Montessori guide humbly aligns themselves with the children, while simultaneously exuding a calm and confident presence. In this way, they are able to connect with each child in a soulful way. The connection they have with each individual in their care is their key to managing the bustling work environment. The children need to feel comfortable, safe, and loved while being provided clear and consistent expectations, and limits, in an environment designed for their personal evolution.

Modeling grace and courtesy in every moment does not only apply to having good manners, but is an all-encompassing way of living a present and compassionate life. Guides respect each child by including them in all



that is happening in their environment. For example, if the classroom assistant is out for the day, the guide may start the day with a conversation about how their absence may affect the morning work cycle. Together, the guide and the children can strategize to lessen the impact of the assistant's absence. This is a genuine practical life lesson that includes caring for our environment and caring for ourselves and others, while being aware, present, and able to think through situations.

Montessori guides are constantly presented with opportunities to create magical moments in which they can gently channel others toward a realization or awareness. By being quiet and observant enough to notice these opportunities, the guide makes this humble magic occur. This is why Montessori teachers are called guides. There is no ego or imposed common curriculum for the masses forcing them to impart wisdom. They lead with an enthusiastically communicable joy for learning and connection to the world, and as the children grow into the people they are meant to be, so do they. ■



Joy Art Show

LMS' WINTER ART SHOW

— MONIKA GEERLING

Litchfield Montessori School's winter art show, Joy, features work from our wonderfully talented students. The exhibit offers a look into the power and joy of creative expression. Through different artists and art mediums, the children bring forth their marvelous imagination.

The exhibit opens with the focus on Vincent van Gogh, a Dutch Post-Impressionist painter who is among one of the most famous and influential figures in the history of Western art. He is best known for painting with bold colors and dramatic brushstrokes. In his later work he focused on painting sunflowers. It was an uplifting time in van Gogh's career. He worked with every shade of yellow and built up the sunflower from thickly layered paint work. With a background of bright hues of blue, van Gogh stated, *"The whole thing will therefore be a symphony in blue and yellow!"*

The elementary students were presented with a still life composition of warm and wonderful sunflowers. They were asked to work with various hues of yellows, browns and blues to create their own van Gogh-style portrait of the sunflower. Some students used paint



to capture the beauty of the sunflower, while others used the technique of collage. The joy of the sunflower radiates from each child's canvas.

From the world of van Gogh, we turn our attention to the American artist, Jackson Pollock. An Abstract Expressionist, Jackson Pollock did something no other artist had done: *"Action painting!"* The 20-foot-long canvas lay on the ground as Pollock danced around it in a sort of trance. He drew with his paintbrush in space and as the paint fell, the lines created a rhythm and movement throughout the canvas. His hope was that the people would have a visceral experience as they stood in front of his paintings, undefined by him. He opened the door to allowing the viewer to feel whatever came to them.

The students were given the opportunity to step into Jackson Pollock's shoes. With a nine-foot canvas and multiple brushes, sticks and paints, the students went to work. Music playing, paint dancing, it was sheer joy

and enthusiasm! Over a two-day period, we built layer upon layer of paint until finally we felt the painting was complete. The fun and excitement that prevailed throughout this project radiates off this canvas. It is a thing of beauty.

Lastly, we move into the three-dimensional art form of pottery. The elementary students were first introduced to creating images on clay tiles. In ancient times, pottery was created to develop essential tools for the home: bowls, vessels, and utensils. As time progressed, this practical skill became an expression of art. The children worked with the properties of wet clay, wedging, and forming square tiles. They were then asked to design whimsical scenes with houses, animals, trees, etc. They carefully drew the scenes into the tile. The second tile focused on nature. The children chose to portray fungi or mountain scapes. The final product displays fun-loving mushrooms set on a forest floor or beautiful mountain scenes.

The children of Litchfield Montessori School are encouraged to be independent thinkers as well as good citizens of the world. As seen through their artwork, the children express their unique qualities as well as their love for the world around them.

Please visit our art exhibition at Oliver Wolcott Library, open through January 28th, 2026 ■



Celebrations

Danielle Snyder

We joyfully celebrate the arrival of Sebastian Paul, born to Children’s House Guide, Danielle Snyder and her husband, Brandon, on Friday, September 26th. Danielle and her family are doing well, and we share in their happiness as they welcome their beautiful new son into the world.



Eva Pedro

For many years, Eva Pedro has lent her creativity and talent to Litchfield Montessori School, shaping the look and feel of so many of our publications and events. From beautifully crafted editions of *The Seed* to marketing materials and our annual auction booklet, Eva’s design work has reflected the spirit and warmth of our community with grace and professionalism. Her ability to translate the school’s values into thoughtful, artful visuals has been an invaluable gift.

Eva embodies the very essence of the Parent Guild, giving generously of her time, skills, and heart to support the school, not only during her daughter’s years here, but also long after Fiona’s graduation. Eva’s steady contributions behind the scenes helped bring our stories to life and strengthened our connection with families and friends. We are deeply grateful for Eva’s enduring dedication, creativity, and the beauty she brought to Litchfield Montessori School through her work.

In celebration of her steady support and quiet strength, we bid a fond farewell to Donna Fortier at the Moving On Ceremony this spring.

Donna was known for her calm presence and unfailing kindness. Families, staff, and students alike said her warmth and professionalism touched every corner of our campus, from greeting parents with a reassuring smile to supporting teachers with care and advocacy.

During the challenges of COVID, Donna’s tireless dedication helped guide us through uncertainty. She coordinated supplies, attended countless meetings, and established safety procedures that kept our students learning in person, a true testament to her commitment and patience. She built genuine connections: swapping book recommendations, sharing family stories, and always lending a listening ear. Donna’s grace, humor, generosity, and her influence will continue to ripple through our community for years to come.

Donna Fortier



Melissa D'Aversa

We are delighted to share the happy news that Children’s House assistant Melissa and her husband, Dan Mennillo, were married on October 4th. We send them our warmest congratulations and best wishes as they begin this new chapter together.

In Memoriam

REMEMBERING LMS TRUSTEE

Chuck Conn

We remember and honor the life of Chuck Conn, a dedicated member of our Board of Trustees. Chuck’s long-time commitment to our community, including his service on the Litchfield Montessori School board, reflected his deep faith in our mission and his caring heart. His generous spirit, wise counsel, and steady support helped guide our school with integrity and compassion. He will be greatly missed, and his contributions will leave a lasting legacy.



RECOMMENDED READING

We’re delighted to share the addition of two beautiful new bookshelves in the foyer. The shelf on the left offers resources to support families in learning more about Montessori education and common parenting questions. You’ll find a range of approachable and inspiring titles, including “Dr. Montessori Speaks to Parents” by Maria Montessori and “The Montessori Family” collection on the baby, toddler, and child.

The shelf on the right features books for children to borrow, and enjoy stories that reflect the languages, traditions, and cultural experiences within our



community. Please help us continue to grow this collection by contributing books that represent your family’s heritage. These selections remind children that who they are is honored here, and they help all of us learn more about one another.

A recent addition is “Little People, BIG DREAMS: Maria Montessori” by Isabel Sánchez Vegara, a child-friendly introduction to Maria Montessori’s early life and work. We invite you to browse, borrow, and enjoy these new resources at your convenience.



*Come enjoy
a night out to*

Gala & Silent Auction

MINGLE.BID.SIP.SAVOR



LIVE MUSIC Myron & the Jam Fam

passed hors d'oeuvres

CRAFT BEER
& WINE INCLUDED

LOCKTOWN
BREWING COMPANY
TIME BEST SPENT

FEB. 27

THE LITCHFIELD INN
432 BANTAM RD, LITCHFIELD
5:30PM - 8:30PM

Upcoming Events

JAN. 6TH - JAN. 28TH

Joy Art Show

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 27TH

Gala & Silent Auction

TUESDAY, MARCH 31ST

Special Community Circle
Virtual Event with Jessica Lahey

THURSDAY, APRIL 2ND

Elementary Project Night

FRIDAY, MAY 8TH

Grandparents Day

THURSDAY, MAY 2ND

School Play

FRIDAY, MAY 22ND

Field Day

FRIDAY, JUNE 5TH

Moving On Ceremony



Stay Connected!

litchfieldmontessori.org

LITCHFIELD MONTESSORI SCHOOL

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