Welcome Fall!

Fall is in full-swing here at OCC... leaves, apples, and pumpkins abound! Children are settling in and classrooms are abuzz with activity. Everyone is busy exploring and discovering with the Montessori materials and other exciting activities that now fill the shelves. Classrooms are enjoy experiences outdoors as well. The wonder of the season never grows old. For many of our friends, this is one of their times to experience all of the joys of the season! Take an extra minute to allow them to explore all of the joys that fall has to offer!

OCC’s Season of Giving & The Harvest Feast

At OCC, we attempt to re-conceptualize the “Holiday Season” by considering ways in which we can give rather than receive. This year, we will once again focus our efforts locally, by collecting donations for The State College Food Bank and The House of Care and participating with UBBC as they host “Out of the Cold.” Each of these organizations have long histories of serving the Centre region. As our kick-off draws near, more information about each organization will be made available, as well as how best we can support their efforts. We would like to offer our children the opportunity to gain an understanding and appreciation of helping others through participation in this project.

This year we will kick off our Season of Giving at our annual Harvest Feast, Wednesday, November 16 (11:45 -12:45).

Inside this issue:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Classroom</th>
<th>Issue</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Classrooms 1, 2, 3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Explorers, Enrichment</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>After School</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fire Safety</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classroom 4, Older &amp; Younger Tots</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Playscape Renovation, Office Updates</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scrip Challenge</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Upcoming Events:
- October 27:28 Scarecrow Days
- November 4: No School, In-Service
- November 7: Parent Ed. Evening TBD
- November 16: Harvest Feast (11:45-12:45)
- November 23: No School, In-Service
- November 24-28: No School, Thanksgiving Holiday
- December 21-30: No School, Winter Break
In science, the shelves will start to fill with animals, beginning with North American birds of prey. The All About Me shelf will fill with works about nutrition in preparation for our Harvest feast. Into December, we will welcome winter with the book The Mitten and associated works on European mammals and the continent of Europe. We will use our five senses to explore the season including music and motions that welcome winter.

Our classroom and our community have been the focus of our first few months of school. We have enjoyed getting to know each other better and learning how to use the Montessori materials. Now that we are comfortable with each other and the classroom environment, we will shift our focus to the larger world, with an introduction to the continents and North America.

The season of Autumn is my favorite so I always feel there is no end to ways that we can celebrate and learn. Nature certainly gives us a lot of material to work with from the harvest of foods to the cycle of leaves. We have enjoyed all of these things as we have been growing in our understanding of each other and our classroom community. The students are learning how to be friends, how to get help from one another, how to use words, and how to complete works fully—from taking the tray off the shelf, doing the work, cleaning it and preparing for the next student, and finally getting it back to the shelf. There are many multi-step processes that the children do in a day. It is fun and rewarding work.

Why do leaves turn colors?

Classroom 1 has been celebrating the beautiful season of autumn with apple and grape tasting and enjoying making and eating apple pancakes. Our colorful leaf collections now decorate our classroom. We will continue exploring the gifts of the harvest by learning about root vegetables, squashes, and cooking some tasty dishes them.

We have begun our study of Planet Earth and how the land, air, and water create our home. As we learn about the continents, we will focus on finding out about the places some of our classmates call home, building more of an understanding about our world, and the similarities we all share.

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Sharing the harvest, preparing foods together, learning songs—our classroom community has active happy mornings!
What a great start to the school year. We have been establishing routines, bonding with peers, and learning how to complete our Montessori works from start to finish. We have been talking about birds and their characteristics. A parent volunteer was also able to come talk about birds and even bring an owl in to show us. As we continue through our Harvest season we will talk about what animals can do to prepare themselves for the winter months. We will explore humans and talk about parts of the body as well as the senses and what they are used for. We will also incorporate our families and talk about who is in our own family as well as completing a family tree. In geography we will take a closer look at landforms and introduce the continents. We look forward to exploring more works to add to these topics in the various parts of our classroom.

Pre-3 Older Toddlers

We have certainly had a lot of fun in the Older Toddler room welcoming fall and all the fun activities that come with it. In the weeks to come we will be doing more activities with leaves and will be introducing pumpkins soon. We will end the month with Scarecrow Day(s) where the children are invited to dress up like a scarecrow on October 28th and 29th. Scarecrow Day is a chance to do some extra fall fun activities. Speaking of fall, now would be a good time to go through your child’s bin and check for seasonally appropriate clothing. Now that we’ve been in school a few weeks and have settled into our routines, we would like to start to introduce some more Montessori concepts/works into the classroom. The use of work rugs, knobbed/knobless cylinders, number rods/red rods are all things that will start to be incorporated into the classroom gradually as well as more difficult Practical Life works. We are looking forward to the next couple of weeks!

Pre-3 Younger Toddlers

Our Younger Toddlers are learning and growing so fast since the start of school! From establishing our classroom routines to learning all about each other, we are on our way to a fun and exciting school year. Looking ahead, there will be many harvest activities such as pumpkin painting and baking pumpkin seeds. We will enjoy exploring dried corn, gourds and hay in our sensory bin. There will also be apple cider to taste and apple butter to spread. We will all work together to prepare yummy muffins with each friend taking turns adding ingredients and stirring. All of our friends can also look forward to many more opportunities to work on their fine motor skills using crayons, markers and paintbrushes to fill our room with all of their special masterpieces!
OCC participates in several programs that help support our operating budget, as well as our scholarship programs. One such program is the Giant/Weis/Sheetz scrip program. By participating in this program, OCC receives up to 5% of the total amount of gift cards purchased.

We have decided to challenge the OCC community to help us earn $1000 by the end of 2016. “10 in 10” represents the ten hundred dollars we are aiming to raise over the course of the next ten weeks.

Scrip cards are available for Giant, Weis and Sheetz in $25, $50, and $100 denominations. These gift cards can be used similarly to cash at any of the three locations. Families can make one-time purchases or schedule automatic weekly purchases (with your cards made available in your Family Folder weekly). Scrip cards may be purchased with cash, check, or by billing to your account.

Order forms are located in the lobby. If billing to your account, orders can be placed via email.

If each OCC family were to purchase a total of $300 of scrip cards during the 10 weeks of this challenge, we could meet our goal!