

# HMS PTO TIMES

*Hilltop Montessori School*

## Upcoming Events

January 16

---

**No School!!!**

January 17

---

**Registration papers due for  
2012-2013 school year**

February 13-17

---

**Canned Food Drive for the United Way**

February 14

---

**PTO Meeting**

Meet in the multi-purpose room 8:45



### LETTER FROM THE PTO PRESIDENT

Hello Hilltop Families,

The PTO hopes you had a very happy holiday season! It is hard to believe that we are half-way through the school year. Over the holiday break, the PTO provided funds to have our carpets professionally cleaned. Thanks to your support of the PTO, we are able to complete projects like this, which help keep our school beautiful.

Like the fall semester, we have some exciting things planned for the second half of the year. In February, the PTO will sponsor a special community service project in conjunction with Valentine's Day. This will be an invaluable opportunity for the Hilltop family to give back to our community, as well as reinforce with our children the importance of serving others. Stay tuned for details!

We will also host our annual Art & Music Festival on Friday, April 20, as well as Teacher Appreciation Week, which shows our staff how much we appreciate everything they do for our school.

It is not too late to become involved with PTO this year! We would love to have you join us as we plan these exciting spring activities. I encourage you to attend one of our meetings, held the second Tuesday of every month in the multi-purpose room at 8:45 a.m. Or, you can check out our PTO blog at [www.hilltopmontessori.com/blog/pto](http://www.hilltopmontessori.com/blog/pto).

Happy 2012!

Sally Dollar  
PTO President

# From the Executive Director...



2012 is off to a wonderful beginning! By now, your child is settled back into the school routine and believe it or not, we all really missed coming to work over the winter break, although it's always nice to spend time with our families and linger in our PJ's. As with last year, we were especially excited to return to beautifully steam cleaned, eco-friendly treated carpeting so once again, we must pause to thank the PTO (which means ALL our parents!) for our freshly cleaned carpeting.

There are many wonderful things going on in the classrooms in January and despite the colder weather, we are continuing with our "deep roots gardening" program, planning for more beds and plants and continuing to integrate the fruits of our labor into meals and snacks. As always, we must thank Southern Pines Chiropractic Center (The Marsh Family) for their sponsorship this year of the program, Cindi Stehr and Jill Walton. In addition to strengthening the gardens, we also have other activities planned for this month at every level. As in

the usual tradition, the kindergarten class will celebrate Chinese New Year and have a dragon parade through the halls, involving the whole school in the excitement. Each classroom is back on track academically and progress reports go home for the majority of our students this month as well.

This month, registration paperwork for next school year (2012-2013) is also due and we hope everyone will consider coming back for another wonderful year. If your child is moving up to another "level" (toddler to preschool, kindergarten to lower elementary, lower elementary to upper elementary, etc.), feel free to schedule a tour in the front office for that level if you would like more in-depth information as to the next phase of your child's education at HMS. Please also note that we will begin filling vacancies from our waiting list on January 17th so it is vital (particularly for some classrooms) to have your paperwork in by that morning.

Internally, the school is also continuing to move into more fund raising in 2012 to assist us with strengthening our learning environments. We have currently applied for several grants and we hope that 2012 will be very successful in this area. We are also planning a special fundraiser at the end of next fall that will correlate with our organic gardens

and this spring, we will once again launch our annual fund. The PTO also has many wonderful plans for 2012, including our annual Art-Music Festival and Teacher Appreciation Week.

In closing, I would like to welcome our new families that started this month. We had several new families join us and at Hilltop, it's definitely the more, the merrier! We wish everyone a wonderful, happy new year and a great second half of our academic year.

**Michele Scott**  
Executive Director

# From the Classrooms

## Toddler Times

### Ms. C & Ms. Shelley

Happy New Year! We are happy to be back with the children and they are happy too.

With the new year we have had a few changes..... mainly all three classes have reduced in size. We have had several children move up to the preschool classroom or moved to another school. We wish them well wherever they are! Secondly, we re-arranged the room, so far the children seem to like the new set up.

Once again, thank you parents for the lovely gifts you gave Shelley and me. You all were so thoughtful and you all are very much appreciated!

Please consider coming to the Toddler Pot Luck more info below....

Hear ye, hear ye....Toddler Parents and Friends, it is that time once again!

### Come to the "Soup & Chili" Pot Luck

Thursday, January 19th ~ come as early as 4:30 pm and stay to whenever!

What to bring:

1. Your favorite soup or chili you like to serve on cold winter days and/or another day( They can be brought in crock pots)
2. Recipe of your soup or chili, we will be compiling them to share with the other families.
3. Bring Can Goods for donating to a local Food Bank.
4. Yourself, children, spouses, and any other family members and friends

We will be having the food in the cafeteria, like we have done for the past Pot Lucks and the children can play outside on the Toddler playground. If it is raining or too cold we will be in the classrooms.

Mark your calendars.....

Next Pot Luck will be in March 2012! Date: TBA and Time: TBD

The theme will be "Story Time" bring a book you like to read to your child or children. We will be donating these books to the Mt.

Laurel Shelby County Library. More details to come!

This month we are learning about the Polar Regions / snow / hibernation. The children have a new job that they are able to work with animals from the Polar Regions and ice! Some are not sure about the ice. I think it is too cold for them. Later in the month we will be making "snow" who knows maybe we will bring on the real snow!!!!!!

I am happy to say I will be back to posting on the blog with receiving a new laptop. It has been rough not having a laptop for the last two plus months!!! Now I just need to get my camera in working condition.

Enjoy some of the photos that were taking before all my technical problems in mid-October.



# From the Classroom

## Ms. Susan's Toddler Class

Welcome back! I hope everyone had a restful and joyous winter break. The toddlers all seem very happy to be back at school with their friends. Our class has changed a bit over the break; we said goodbye to one friend who moved up to the primary class, and we met another. So our class is now officially all boys!

Last month we learned the signs and Spanish for all the winter holiday celebrations and in January

we are beginning to study winter-snow, ice, the Polar Regions and the animals that live there. Penguins and polar bears are very popular! There will be a few special art projects coming home soon.

We are continuing the Zoo Phonics program where we are learning how all of our letters sound. The children are really enjoying blending with Ms. C and Ms. Shelley's class for large group lessons and snack each day, so you may hear about an expanded group of friends when the children talk about school.

We have had the chance to harvest some of our winter vegetables from the garden as well. The broccoli and cauliflower make great snacks.

Thanks so much to all of you for the gifts over the holidays. Your generosity never ceases to amaze me, and I am truly thankful for you all.

Take a look at some of the pictures from the toddler environment. I promise we have as much fun taking them as you might imagine!



# From the Classrooms

## PreSchool News

**Ms. Marcia & Ms. Allison**

Happy New Year families of Ms. Marcia and Ms. Allison,

Here we are in 2012 and half way through the school year; time has truly evaporated. I trust that you and your families had a wonderful holiday season together. I would like to welcome Tai Deighton and his parents, Ngar and Tim to our class. Tai is three years old and comes to us from Ms. C's Toddler room. We have begun our semester by attending to our outside classroom garden with Ms. Jill. All the children got into the soil and seedlings by putting in pansies, herbs, various leafy greens and some root vegetables. Our class is responsible for providing our school's "from the garden" snack in April and we should have some great foods to harvest from our own beds.

We are deep into looking at the rich and diverse culture of Eastern Europe this month. Most of us are familiar with Western Europe but few of us know that much about this turbulent, fascinating area of the world. Mia Ashar's Mother, Linda, will be enriching us with some materials from that part Russia west of the Ural Mountains which is considered to be Europe. We have been listening to music from Hungary, Poland, Romania and the Czech Republic. If your child has something at home which reflects this culture, please send it in.

We are studying Physical Science concepts now and are experimenting with buoyancy, magnetism, light refraction and weights and balances. This also provides many children with opportunities to share their magnets, prisms and simple science materials.

Let me take this moment to encourage you to fill out your registration forms for next school

year by January 17th. There have been a number of new families who want to apply for admission this year. Enrollment will open up to them after that date.



## Registration deadline

January 17th, 2012

## Ms. Shellie & Ms. Lorena

The month of January is in full swing. We have started studying the continent of Europe with an emphasis on Eastern Europe. If you have any items from Eastern Europe please send them in for the class to see. In Science, we are studying what sinks and floats, magnets, light refraction and rainbows.

On January 26th the class will be preparing a tasting for the school with items from the schools gardens. This will be our first time doing this and will be lots of fun. The children will pick, prepare and fix the food for the whole school.

At the end of January, we will celebrate Chinese New Year and start the studying of Asia.

It is going to be a busy but very fun month.

# From the Classroom

## Mary Jo and Christi's Class

In December, our topic of study was the Polar Regions of the Earth. The children enjoyed learning about Antarctica and the Arctic Region, and about the animals that live there. We studied penguins and polar bears in depth. The polar ice table was a classroom favorite. We also learned about the different Festivals of Light

around the world. Several festivals we studied were Diwali, Ramadan, Hanukkah, Christmas and Kwanzaa. One of our new classroom jobs was a small tree that the children could decorate with ornaments. Another job that the children loved was the menorah to which the children could add wooden candles and flames. Our holiday party was on December 17th, and we had a great time. We decorated reindeer cookies, courtesy of Alex's grandmothers. Thank you, volunteers, for all of your help with the

party. Our book exchange was a new experience for the students. They enjoyed receiving a book from one of their classmates and another book from their teachers. Crafts are always fun in December. Several that we did were push-pining ornaments, coloring paper reindeer, making tri-bead candy canes and creating beautiful sand ornaments.

In January we will study Eastern Europe, magnets, sink/float and light refraction.



# From the Classrooms

## Ms. Cindi and Ms. Toni

Happy New Year! Toni and I are so glad to be back in school. We want to thank everyone who helped with our Holiday Party. The kids had a great time making crafts, eating pizza and having the book exchange. Jennifer Dunbar made a cute ornament with the kids. We all had fun!

Last month our class participated in the preparation and cooking for the Deep Roots program. Everyone had a great time harvesting vegetables and cooking for the school. The Kindergarteners

delivered the food to the other classes. It was a good experience and we are already planning for our next turn.

This month we are studying physical science. The kids are experimenting with hot/cold, sink and float, light refraction with prisms, color mixing and magnetic/non-magnetic. We have already done some fun experiments! We are also learning about Eastern Europe.

Cindi and Toni



# From the Classrooms

## Lower Elementary News

**Ms. Carol & Ms. Vicky**

Happy New Year everyone!!!

We have begun our continent study with Asia. We are concentrating on the countries of Pakistan, China, Thailand, Turkey and India. A big thank you to the Pabani and the Issa families for their fabulous power point presentation on "Pakistan Today, Tomorrow, and Yesterday". The class learned much and had a wonderful feast Pakistani style.

We have moved to the country of China. The children have done research and are excited about the Chinese New Year celebration and a special guest speaker, Xin Anders.

In science we are continuing our study of what a scientist does. This month we are doing comparison experiments which we will incorporate with our Cooperative Learning.

We are learning about the classifications of animals and will find what animals are indigenous to China. The children always love the study of animals.

A big thank you to Donna Swalley and all the mothers who made our Holiday Celebration lots of fun. Thank you for all the gifts and kindness.

Upcoming Events:

January 17 - Progress Reports go home

January 20 – Progress Reports signed and returned

January 20 – Fieldtrip to Alabama Water Course

January 30 – Book Report (Timeline) due

## Upper Elementary News

**Ms. Janet & Mr. Brent**

Students in the Upper Elementary had an exciting month in December with field trips, the annual Holiday Shoppe, and lots of parties. During the Holiday Shoppe, other students from throughout the school were invited to come into the classroom to make purchases for their family and friends.

Upper Elementary students really worked, taking turns as personal shoppers (especially for our preschool and toddler friends), merchants (arranging

merchandise, selling, making change, and counting down a station), and wrappers (making sure each gift was packaged safely and labeled correctly).

Proceeds from the Holiday Shoppe will help defray the cost of our upcoming 4 day, 3 night trip to Environmental Camp McDowell. Also in December, the Upper Elementary class published their first ever literary anthology. The publication, called TOPSIDE, includes poetry and short stories written by students during the first semester. Field trips included a fun and fabulous ice skating trip as well as a

visit to the Children's Theater. Students and teachers alike are glad to be back in school after the Winter Break and have hit the ground running with a full schedule.

Additional information and photos are located on our blog at <http://www.hilltopmontessori.com/blog/upperelem/>

# From the Classrooms

## Middle School News

### Green Screen

The green screen was where the news crew did their weather reports. We all got to have a chance to stand in front of the green screen. The cameras for the green screen had no camera men but were remotely activated. The cameras had small TVs under the camera lenses so you could see what people watching the broadcast could see. It was amazing.

- Justin Rudd

### Tour of TV Station

First of all, I would like to thank Mr. Dunaway for giving us a tour of the TV station. When we first arrived he showed us the radio towers and told us how the towers worked and how all the tragedies that happened on the tower. When we went in, he took us downstairs and showed us the table where they do reports. Afterwards, we got to sit in the chairs and go over to the green screen where they did the weather reports. We then had to leave and go to the radio station.

-David Fox

### Say Bear and Dining Diva

We got to meet Say Bear, who is the producer of the radio station 100WAPI, and he gave us a tour of the station. At the end of our tour, we got to meet the Dining Diva (a radio talk-show host) She took a picture with us, which was the highlight of the field trip for my music teacher, Mr. Derek.

- David Allen Riha

### The RoundTable

First off, I just wanted to thank Mr. Dunaway for letting us come in for the RoundTable sports radio talk show. My favorite part was getting to watch a live radio broadcast and being able to listen to all the callers call in and voice their opinions on the Alabama football situation in the BCS (Bowl Championship Series). I think it was extraordinary that he would take time out of his day to let us tour the studio and listen in on the broadcast.

-Hayden Desmond

### The Opening Drive

We went to Jox Radio Station and saw the opening drive, live. They were talking about the Alabama basketball game the previous night. We got to meet Jay Barker during a commercial and it was very cool to be in the room while they were doing the show. Our teacher, Mr. Derek, got so excited about meeting Jay Barker

he started jumping up and down, repeatedly.

-Trey Moss



**Everyone is welcome to come to our monthly PTO meetings. All meetings take place the 2nd Tuesday of each month at 8:45 in the Multi-Purpose Room.**



**Future PTO Dates:**

February 14

March 14

April 10

May 8



**Hilltop PTO Officers**

**President:** Sally Dollar

**Vice President:** Harper Basquill

**Secretary:** Nancy Patterson

**Treasurer:** Paola Garza

**Fundraising Chair:** Martha Kay Griffith

**Social Event Chair:** Libby Holmes

**Publicity Coordinator:** Alli Kahl

**Newsletter Editor:** Jennifer Burke

**Box Tops Co-Coordinators:** Jenny Brengelman  
Elana Swiney

**Scholastic Book Fair Coordinator:** Jill Walton

**Teacher Appreciation Week Coordinator:** Anneris Schutts

[sallydollar1@gmail.com](mailto:sallydollar1@gmail.com)

[basquillm@hotmail.com](mailto:basquillm@hotmail.com)

[nanpatleeds@aol.com](mailto:nanpatleeds@aol.com)

[paolagarza@mac.com](mailto:paolagarza@mac.com)

[mktgriffith@gmail.com](mailto:mktgriffith@gmail.com)

[libbyholmes@me.com](mailto:libbyholmes@me.com)

[kahl.alli@gmail.com](mailto:kahl.alli@gmail.com)

[xplr lif@charter.net](mailto:xplr lif@charter.net)

[jennyb52@bellsouth.net](mailto:jennyb52@bellsouth.net)

[eswiney@bellsouth.net](mailto:eswiney@bellsouth.net)

[jjweldonw@att.net](mailto:jjweldonw@att.net)

[pranneris@gmail.com](mailto:pranneris@gmail.com)