

NEWSLETTER

Volume 50, Issue 4

December 2024



Important Dates to Remember

PICTURE RE-TAKE/MAKE-UP
Thursday, December 5

WINTER BREAK
December 23-January 1
(School Closed)
Re-open on January 2nd

*In Memory of My
"Cher Bear"*

*October 30, 1971 –
December 23, 1995*

Dear GRMS Families,

Another year is coming to an end, and we will soon welcome in 2025. I was looking back at last year's December newsletter where I shared my German/Russian, Filipino ancestry and growing up poor in the Auburn valley. I also shared that I grew up in a family that was filled with love. My German mother was a force to contend with and my Filipino father was someone who never raised his voice or hand toward his children. Unfortunately, he never was around very much since he traveled most of the year to find work in the fields of Arizona or in the canneries of Alaska. We were reminded of his existence when a crate of grapes would be delivered or better yet, a box of king crab legs.

Many of our Christmas celebrations were held at the Filipino Community Hall in Algona. Santa was typically a man with a brown face and a suit that was much too big for his petite, Filipino body. It was always fun at the community hall with a Filipino band attempting to play popular "big band" hits on their trumpets and mandolins. Children and adults alike would fill the dance floor. At the end of the evening, most of the kids would be fast asleep on the benches that encircled the room. My red-headed, freckled face mom was popular with both the men and the women at the Filipino gatherings. Everyone loved her because she was beautiful and witty. At the parties, she would be all glammed up in a pretty dress, seamed nylons, high heels, and sparkly costume jewelry. She would dab a light perfume behind each ear. It was heavenly watching her enter a room and turning so many heads.

At home, "mama" would be outfitted in her work clothes, doing everything she could to maintain a broken-down house without heat and proper plumbing. She did her best to put food on the table and keep her children entertained with her make-shift toys. She was a wonderful mother who filled my life with so much love, creativity, and resourcefulness.

I wish you all a joyous holiday season and hope you have time to reflect on some memories of your own!

Warmly,

Diana Mamerto Holz – Daughter of Mariano Mamerto and Elsa Riechel



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Approved by



Welcome New Staff Member

The Brick Schoolhouse welcomes Ms. Kaylee Lehman. She will work with Mrs. Fietz in the Lower Elementary classroom. Ms. Lehman is trained in elementary education and has worked in both public schools and a Waldorf school. We are excited to have her join our GRMS family.

School Hours



Children should be dropped off no later than **9:00am each day**. Late arrivals are disruptive to the classroom routine, and it also throws your own child off. They often miss the morning lesson and morning greeting. This can make them feel out of sync with the day's planned activities.

Dress Your Child for the Weather!

Since children go outdoors every day, please dress them for the weather. A heavy, hooded jacket that zips, a knit hat, mittens, and warm socks will help make your child more comfortable in our chilling weather conditions. It's great if the mittens are attached by yarn and strung through the child's coat.



Remaining 2024-2025 School Calendar

Closure Dates

December 23-31 – Winter Break

January 1 – New Year's Day

January 20 – MLK Day

February 17 – President's Day

April 7-11 - Spring Break
(Brick Schoolhouse Only)

May 26 – Memorial Day

Last day of school - To be determined.

June 19 – Juneteenth

July 3rd and 4th – Independence Day



Hard copies of the school calendar are available in the office for those who have not received one.

Inclement Weather Closures

In the event of snow, Green River Montessori School will always try to remain open but will consider the safety of our staff and families first.

If the parking lot is too icy to enter safely, we may have to have a late start of 9:00am to allow time for Marty to get here to de-ice the walkways.

If it is necessary for the school to have a late opening or to close completely, you will be emailed by 6:15 am via email.

Montessori Education

- **Each child is valued as a unique individual.** Montessori education recognizes that children learn in different ways and accommodates all learning styles. Students are free to learn at their own pace, each advancing as he is ready, guided by the teacher and an individualized learning plan.
- **Beginning at an early age, Montessori nurtures order, concentration, and independence.** Intentional classroom design, materials, and daily routines support the student's emerging "self-regulation" (the ability to educate one's self, and to think about what one is learning), in toddlers through adolescents.

<https://amshq.org/Families/Why-Choose-Montessori/Benefits-of-Montessori>



Holiday Celebrations

GRMS does not "celebrate" teacher-initiated holidays; however, they are acknowledged when children bring them up. In addition, our classrooms are filled with the signs of the "season" such as snowflakes, nature's branches, leaves, and twigs, and wonderful scents from gingerbread, cooking projects, and spices! It's a joyous time for all. Children will have lots of "glitz and glam" to make all sorts of creations of their own liking.

December Tuition

Although December is a shorter month, tuition will remain the same for everyone. Some months have more days, so in the end it all balances out to 20 days a month average. Automatic payments will be deducted on December 26th. This makes it possible to start the New Year with a clear record. The school tax identification number is **91-1171288**.

Piano Recital

A piano recital for those taking lessons is scheduled for Sunday, December 15th at 3:00pm. Please contact the piano teacher, Mrs. Beran for details. bjberan11@yahoo.com

Conferences

What a great turn-out for the family/teacher conferences! Many were in-person, and a few were by telephone. We had 90% participation! If you missed yours, please don't hesitate to schedule one for a later time.

Picture Day

By now you should have received an email, linking you to your child's photo. Make-up and re-takes are scheduled for Thursday, December 5th

Book Fair

We earned more than \$600 in free books from our Book Fair! Thank you for your support.

Happy reading!

Ways to help children cultivate happiness:

Foster strong social connections.

Children with strong friendships and relationships are more likely to experience positive emotions. Although peer relationships often come with challenges and disagreements, these shared experiences create a sense of safety, belonging, and purpose.

Model grace and courtesy.

Being kind to others naturally improves one's mood. Demonstrating kindness encourages children to engage in random acts of kindness themselves.

Introduce and practice mindfulness.

Mindfulness is the ability to be fully present. Model for children what it looks like to pause and appreciate the moment. Invite children to pay attention to what is happening; what they are feeling, hearing, seeing, or anything else they notice. Try leading a guided meditation as a classroom community or read a simple meditation together as a class.

Lead an appreciation practice.

Gratitude promotes happiness. Work with students to express what each person is grateful for such as a loving family, helpful friends, or completing a large work. Practice taking turns at a community meeting allowing each child to share their gratitude. Provide opportunities for children to write thank you cards. Helping children recognize that they can feel disappointed and grateful simultaneously can increase feelings of happiness as well.

For full article, go to

[8 Ways to Help Children Cultivate Happiness](#)

Volunteer Credits

To enhance each child's experience at our school, we must all work together. Each GRMS family is expected to earn 500 points (or pay \$200.00) during the schoolyear to satisfy this effort.

500 Points – Meets \$200.00 Requirement

450 Points – Deduct \$180.00

400 Points – Deduct \$160.00

350 Points – Deduct \$140.00

300 Points – Deduct \$120.00

250 Points – Deduct \$100.00

200 Points – Deduct \$80.00

150 Points – Deduct \$60.00

75 Points – Deduct \$30.00

We will post various volunteer tasks throughout the year for families to take advantage of.

Families can pick and choose what fundraiser(s) they would like to support. Twenty percent of the profits can apply to the annual fundraising responsibility; the other 20% goes directly into the school's Activity Account that is spent directly on special school events and staff development activities.

Brick Schoolhouse Families Only

You can deduct \$20 per month for signing up to provide snack for both classrooms. Twenty-five points are given for helping on a field trip or volunteering at the YMCA for the Friday swim lessons.

Congratulations to Lori Fietz for earning her Master of Arts in Montessori Education and Leadership! We are very proud of you!