

**From the Principal.....**

This is the last Bulletin for the year and my last Principal's column.

I have no doubt that the success of this school is not due to any one person. It is due to the wonderful community that we have and the amazing commitment, passion, energy and vision of parents and staff alike. It's been about teamwork and keeping our children and the Montessori philosophy at the centre of decision making.

I believe leadership is about courage, integrity, humility, compassion, passion, wisdom and humour. I hope that I have displayed some of these virtues during my time at the Canberra Montessori School.

My thanks to the outstanding commitment of the teachers and administrative staff – they have kept me grounded and on track and I have made lifetime friends with many of them. They are the ones that have made a difference to the lives of the students in their guidance and adherence to the Montessori philosophy. The continuing commitment to the growth and development of the school by board members over the years has lifted me up and inspired me to do better.

I have been truly blessed with a wonderfully supportive parent community although I have to admit at times it has been quite a challenge!

An organization can manage change if at the heart of it is a genuine vision and a set of values and policies based on that vision. The vision I believe we have is that of the Montessori movement – to place all children in our world at the centre of society and to assist them in becoming the transforming elements leading to a harmonious and peaceful humanity.

As I hand over the reins to your new Principal, Tina Forsyth, I am confident that the foundations laid by those who have gone before will sustain the school into the future.

Goodbye and thank you for all your cards and good wishes. I will miss you all.

*Christine Harrison*  
*Principal*



**Afternoon Programme**

**Are you continuing next year?**

***Please remember to let Sally-Anne know before the end of term.***

**Upcoming Dates**

***TERM 4 2008***

- |        |                                     |
|--------|-------------------------------------|
| Dec 16 | Red Gum end of year event 6pm       |
| Dec 17 | Big Splash Excursion Cycle 3s 9-3pm |
| Dec 17 | Graduation and Disco. 5pm – 7pm     |
|        | BYO picnic, free sausage sizzle.    |
|        | Last Day of Term 4.                 |

*Please check Bulletin regularly for changes to published events.*



***TERM DATES FOR 2009***

- |         |                                      |
|---------|--------------------------------------|
| Term 1: | 2 February – 9 April (2 & 3 Feb PFD) |
| Term 2: | 28 April – 3 July                    |
| Term 3: | 20 July – 25 September               |
| Term 4: | 12 October – 16 December             |

**Students return on 4 February 2009**

**GRADUATION CEREMONY AND  
END OF YEAR CELEBRATION -  
HOLDER**

**17 December at 5pm**

Join us for our Graduation Ceremony and End of Year Picnic (BYO) from 5pm - 7pm on the last day of Term. Everyone welcome.

**IT'S BEEN A LONG TIME COMING  
BUT..... HAVE A LOOK AT OUR  
NEW WEBSITE & LOGO  
WWW.CANBERRAMONTESSORI.COM**

## Absences – Cycles 2 and 3

Please remember to ring the office and notify us before 9.30am if your child will be absent. (A message can be left on the answering machine at any time but please speak slowly and clearly.) If we have not been notified, a staff member will ring you to make sure you know of your child's whereabouts.

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### Santa Claus: Making the Invisible Visible

Written by Maren Stark Schmidt. Mrs. Schmidt founded a Montessori school and holds a Masters of Education from Loyola College in Maryland.

"I've never gotten a present from Santa Claus," said Iliana, my 12-year-old seatmate on an east coast flight. "My parents thought I should only be given verifiable facts. They told me there is no veracity in Santa Claus."

"It's too bad that no one ever told your parents about the Secret of Santa Claus. When you know the Secret, you believe in Santa Claus all your life, even if you can't verify facts." I said.

"You believe in Santa Claus? What secret?"

"It's simple, but..."

"Please, tell me," Iliana said.

"We're flying on a plane right now. Who built this plane? Who designed it? Who got it ready to fly? Who trained our pilots? We know that someone had to do it, and with some research we could find those people. We won't though. We'll never meet those people. I'll call them invisible workers since they work to give us something we couldn't do alone."

I took a sip of coffee. "There are thousands of invisible workers for almost everything we use. I have no idea who planted the beans for this cup of coffee, or who picked them, roasted them and packaged them. I can only thank our flight attendant, the last person in this invisible line of people."

"I have faith," I continued, "that when I wish to fly on an airplane, or have a cup of coffee, these unknown people will have done their jobs, and my desires will come true. I don't have to grow my own coffee beans or build my own airplane because of all these wonderful people."

"So you're saying that Santa Claus is an invisible worker?" said Iliana.

"I see Santa Claus being all these people in the world, who strive to serve humankind, to make life more enjoyable, more comfortable, more magical. I will never see these people who do so many things for me, but they are most assuredly real. When I understood this, and I was older than 12, I wanted to be that helpful kind of person. In the first stage of believing in Santa Claus, when we're little, we're on the receiving end. When we live the secret, we are on the giving side, which is fun. Being like Santa, which is doing

our jobs with cheerful intention to help others, makes amazing things happen, such as flying at 30,000 feet at 500 miles an hour, while sipping coffee, and talking to you about Santa Claus."

"I get it. Once you know how Santa works, you become Santa Claus. You do your regular stuff with love in your heart, and you try to help others without expecting anything in return. Santa is people helping people. I'm pretty sure nobody told my parents that," Iliana said. "I think I'm going to have some fun being an invisible worker."

I was hoping I could show Iliana that Santa is that invisible force of faith, charity, believing and doing that cannot be easily explained. For the young child, one way we can help them see and experience this force is in Santa's work. As the young child enters a developmental stage of reasoning, around age six, and begins to wonder about Santa, we need to give them opportunities to work and contribute to something bigger than themselves. We need to show them how to choose to be part of the magical power of giving, service and surprise.

As we walked off the plane, Iliana said, "I'm so excited about Santa Claus. I've already got some great ideas. I think this feeling is what the saying, 'It is more blessed to give than to receive,' means. Boy, are my parents and a few other people going to be surprised."

Iliana spied her grandparents and started singing, "Here Comes Santa Claus." They laughed and said, "What are you so happy about?"

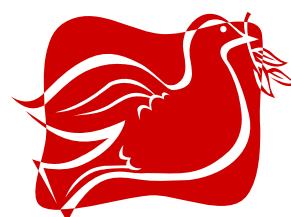
As I walked away, Iliana waved and winked at me, then answered, "It's a secret."

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To the staff, parents & students of CMS from Debbie Boon

As many of you know, Ava, Simon and I are leaving at the end of the year to live in Western Australia. We're all sorry to leave the school. For me, I have so enjoyed working on and off in all the classrooms. It's been such a privilege to watch and learn from the dedicated directors and assistants and of course from the children. The classes are a delight to work in and I will miss everyone, including the parents I've come to know. Merry Christmas and best wishes for 2009.

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*COMMUNITY NEWS*

**JANUARY SPORTS SCHOOL**  
**VACATION PROGRAM**

will be conducted by

**FUN FIT SPORTS**, at Canberra Grammar  
Boys, 5 – 23 Jan and St Edmunds College,  
Narrabundah 27 – 30 January.

Fun Fit Sports Programs are designed for  
children 5 - 13 yrs and are based on active  
participation in a variety of different sports  
and activities including:

- \* Netball      \* Ball skills      \* Soccer
- \* Motor skill development      \* Athletics
- \* Basketball      \* Golf      \* Dance
- \* A F L      \* Modified Hockey      \* T-ball
- \* Badminton      \* Cricket      \* Tae Kwon Do
- \* Baseball      \* Flag football

Excursions - we are off to Swimming and  
waterslides this holiday and Ten Pin Bowling.

*\*\* CCB % SUBSIDY ASSISTANCE applies to the  
program (fees from \$6 p/day) \*\**

For program forms, enquiries and bookings  
phone KAREN 0418-216-836 or  
[www.funfitsports.com](http://www.funfitsports.com) or email:  
[karendp@bigpond.net.au](mailto:karendp@bigpond.net.au)  
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Children's Services