

Montessori makes world for children

By Casey Hens
staff writer



cultural collage

The world of Montessori is one of color and brightness, of self-learning and sensory perception.

Maria Montessori, the late Italian physician who founded the educational concept in the early 1900s, envisioned a little people's world where children could develop at their own pace.

"Our students' natural spontaneity... had long been suppressed by... adults, who believe they can do everything better than children," Montessori said in a 1970 translation of one of her books. "The idea that the child is a personality separate from the adult never seemed to occur to anybody."

Walking into The Maria Montessori Center in Farmington Hills, the method and concept is clear.

Small groups and individuals are learning different subjects. Some

work with teachers, some alone. Some work at tables, some on the floor. A comfortable hum of learning goes on throughout the day.

Students from a variety of suburban areas, including Farmington Hills, Bloomfield Hills, Southfield and Troy attend.

"YOU DON'T have to discipline a child who is busy," explained Thomas Kerbaw, who with his wife, Sharmella, own and teach at the private school where children from 2½ to 12

years, and a variety of cultural backgrounds, are educated.

The two opened their school in 1980, renting space from the North Farmington Baptist Church and expanded the school to handle preschool, kindergarten and elementary children in a new 6,000-square-foot building next door to the church in 1986.

They are not affiliated with that church, but their students do represent a cross-section of religions and cultures from around the world. In one classroom of preschoolers and kindergartners, for example, students from Iraq, Pakistan, India, France, Lebanon, Italy and the Philippines are represented.

Teachers also represent a cross-section of the world. One hails from Mexico and teaches Spanish to the students; another, who teaches music, comes from Sri Lanka. All the teachers, including Thomas and Sharmella, received their Montessori training overseas where it takes two years to fully learn the methods, the owners said.

NOT ONLY the basics, but poetry, music and other essentials are interwoven throughout the school day.

"Montessori builds on the ideas that the child is like a tape recorder," said Sharmella, who teaches younger children.

The youngsters' lessons are like a set of building blocks, which eventually make the person, she added. "The environment is really geared to their needs."

The Montessori method stresses development of self and encourages children to teach one another. The materials are hands-on; many at the Hills school are handmade by teachers.

"The word is enticement, the word is attraction. Just look at the colors!" Thomas added, as he walked around an area filled with preschoolers and kindergartners. All were learning hands-on with words, numbers, maps and pictures.

Although most of the children at The Maria Montessori Center begin at young ages and progress to the elementary level, some come from the



Staff photos by RANDY BORST

Brian Campbell, first grade teacher, explains to his students about the changing seasons.

'Montessori builds on the ideas that the child is like a tape recorder.'

—Sharmella Kerbaw, teacher

The Maria Montessori Center
Farmington Hills



Ryan Gath, first grader, is learning to identify and understand the characteristics of various fish.



Maria Foster, teacher, works with John Sloan III, 4, who is learning the shape of geometric solids by touch instead of sight.

Some cable users to pay less

By Joanne Maliszewski
staff writer

Less than 8,000 of 23,000 MetroVision of Oakland County cable television subscribers will tune into the benefits of a new rate adjustment.

Beginning March 1, subscribers of the Disney and PASS premium services will pay less, said Robert McCann, MetroVision general manager.

The adjustment means that those subscribing to PASS at \$9.95 a month will pay \$8.95. Those subscribing to Disney at \$9.95 will pay \$8.50 a month, McCann said.

Unlike other cable companies in the Detroit area, MetroVision is not increasing its basic service cable rates. "We think because of the growth, particularly in Farmington Hills and Novi, we are able to hold the costs down," McCann said.

MetroVision officials informed the Southwestern Oakland Cable Commission Feb. 9 that rates would be adjusted for the two premium services, said Judith Kral, administrative assistant to Lark Reid, SWOCC executive director.

Beginning March 1, subscribers of the Disney and PASS premium services will pay less, said Robert McCann, MetroVision general manager.

"It was a business decision the company felt they were justified in making," Kral said.

SUBSCRIBERS who have premium package services, such as Disney, PASS and a movie service, for example, might see an increase. For example, right now in the three-pay package, Disney is \$7.50 and PASS is \$7.50. That would mean a slight increase for both under the adjusted rates, Kral said.

Subscribers will still receive a discount with the premium packages. For three or more premium services, subscribers receive a \$2.70 discount and they receive the remote

control and cable guide free.

Kral said that she had received only one complaint about the effect of the adjustment on the premium packages.

Basic rates will remain as follows: tier I (channels 1-22) \$2.45 monthly; tier II (channels 1-35) \$5.45; tier III (channels 1-63) \$12.45 monthly.

About 99.9 percent of all subscribers take tier III service. The average customer subscribes to 1.6 premium services, McCann said.

Last year, MetroVision increased the basic rate for tier III from \$10.45 to \$12.45. That increase was expected in light of government deregulation, the 1984 Cable Communications Policy Act, that took effect Jan. 1, 1987.

The new law enables cable television companies to increase their monthly rates without obtaining approval from local government units that hold the cable television franchises.

MetroVision provides cable services to residents in Novi, Farmington Hills and Farmington. The cable commission represents the three cities.

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NEW GRADUATES

Joseph Smith of Farmington Hills graduated from Eastern Michigan University, Ypsilanti.

Farmington Hills resident Sydney Covert received an associate of arts degree in the legal assistant field from Mercy College of Detroit.

Farmington resident Cheryl Grisom received an associate of science degree in nursing from Mercy College of Detroit.

DEAN'S LIST

Amy Smith, freshman, and Sangita Gandhi, sophomore, both from the Farmington area, were named to the dean's list at Kalamazoo College.

Melissa Degrazia, Michele Eshkarian, Eric Maurer and Jill Baaki, all

from the Farmington area, were named to the dean's list at Central Michigan University.

John Gilmer of Farmington Hills was named to the dean's list at Western Michigan University. He is a 1987 North Farmington High School graduate.

Farmington Hills residents Allan Curtis, Kevin Harmala, Janette Fleck and Sarah Junius were named to the dean's list at Northern Michigan University.

Three Farmington-area residents were named to the dean's list at Hamline University, St. Paul, Minn.

Beth Rader of Farmington was named to the dean's list at Lenox-Rhine College, Hickory, N.C.

Kathryn Diebold of Farmington Hills was named to the dean's list at Siena Heights College, Adrian.

DISPLAYS PHOTOS

Bridgette Klym of Farmington is among students with Albion College who had photography on display in the Print Gallery at the Albion College Bobbitt Visual Arts Center.

Klym, a 1984 graduate of Farmington Hills Mercy High School, is a senior.

The photography chosen for the exhibit was selected by Albion College faculty members from work completed in the introduction to photography class.

WINS AWARD

Frank Bonasso of Farmington Hills has received a student service award from the University of Detroit School of Dentistry.

The award recognized Bonasso's scholastic and extracurricular achievements. A post-graduate trainee in oral and maxillofacial surgery, Bonasso received the Clinical Achievement Award in Fixed Prosthodontics in 1987.