

Published September 30th, 2009

Students Participate in Worldwide Song for Peace

By Jennifer Wake



Diablo Valley Montessori teachers signed the song, "Light a Candle for Peace," with students as part of a world-wide recognition of the United Nations International Day of Peace Photo Jennifer Wake

"This was not about the politics of peace, but about learning how to live in a peaceful world," Smith added. "The children are our future, and I personally believe that if adults across the world teach peaceful ways of interacting with each other there is hope for world peace."

In addition to the song, which included the refrain "Sing Peace Around the World," students learned about children from other cultures and the different places throughout the world where other children were singing.

"Learning about other cultures is always an ongoing part of our curriculum," Smith said. "We have puzzle maps where children can learn the names of countries, and have events that bring foods from other countries for children to taste. We want them to understand they're not the only people on the earth."

Reach the reporter at: jennifer@lamorindaweekly.com

Copyright © Lamorinda Weekly, Moraga CA

Students from Diablo Valley Montessori School in Lafayette gathered in their front play area on Sept. 21, surrounding a lit candle and waiting for their turn to sing a song for peace that was being sung across the globe. The 120 students, who ranged in age from 3 months (although they didn't sing) to 6 years old, sang "Light a Candle for Peace" for five minutes while teachers kneeled before them using sign language to guide the children through the lyrics. The song, which was coordinated in 35 countries among more than 80,000 children, was part of a worldwide campaign at Montessori schools across the globe to recognize the United Nations' International Day of Peace.

"The song made its way from New Zealand to Hawaii and was sung in 20 languages, in 24 different time zones," Diablo Valley Montessori School Director Suzette Smith said. Diablo Valley Montessori students were assigned to sing for five minutes starting at 10:33 a.m.

"This special day coincides with our school's value education program which will highlight the values of peace, respect, tolerance and responsibility this year," Smith said. "Maria Montessori believed in the power of children. Montessori programs emphasize learning about other cultures and the basic needs of all people. Additionally our young children are learning about what peace means and how they can incorporate peace into their lives."

According to Smith, Montessori schools founder Marie Montessori once said, "Establishing everlasting peace is the work of education; all politics can do is keep us out of war."