



Monteverde Friends School/Escuela de los Amigos

February, 2023

www.mfschool.org/donate

It's That time of Year ...



Mini-courses on Friday afternoons focus on outdoor activities this term. Participants in the bicycling group stopped at an MFS volunteer's home to refuel with cookies and have some fun.

Here on the mountain, the sun has arrived to replace the wet season. High winds have come with the sun, staying longer than usual this year. Our mornings bring us wind-blown mist that gives us the gift of rainbows most days, but it is cold at this altitude! Yes, we know that we won't get much sympathy from our northern neighbors, but even 59 degrees Fahrenheit is darn cold when mixed with strong winds and mist when few buildings include heating systems.

Along with the sun have come many tourists. Judging by the crowds and tour vehicles in our small town, it looks like Monteverde's ecotourism industry is thriving this year. That's crucial here, as the tourist businesses and their impact on other businesses (e.g. grocery stores) make up about 80% of the local economy. Most tourist-related businesses have to earn enough between January and April each year to sustain them the rest of the year -- and this year, to try and backfill for losses in the 2020 through 2022 seasons.

The best part, though, is that among the many visitors to Monteverde, several have provided us with special events -- talks, activities and performances -- and with valued volunteers who join us each year. We are happy to highlight all these in this newsletter!

Can you help us meet this \$15,000 challenge?

During March, we evaluate applications for financial aid for the 2023-24 school year. We hope to add to donations so that all of our current students will be able to continue with MFS.

A few donors have offered \$15,000 as a challenge, hoping that with small or large donations from other supporters, we can match their generosity.

How you can help:

United
States

[Donate via
Network for
Good or
PayPal](#)

Send checks to: Jenny Rowe,
Monteverde Friends, U.S., PO Box 2153,
Campton, NH 03223

Canada	Donate Online	Send checks to: Monteverde Cloud Forest Educational Foundation (MEF), 1305 Cedar, Nelson BC V1I 2E7d
Costa Rica	Either stop by the school or go to MFS Donate and scroll down for direct transfer numbers for BCR and BNCR in dollars or colones.	

Lynne Cherry: Engaging Children in Protecting Our Environment



Lynne chats with a few of our students after her presentation.



Lynne's introductory slide for her MFS presentation.

One of the visitors to Monteverde this month is [Lynne Cherry](#) well known and best selling children's author, illustrator and environmentalist. Our teachers and some students immediately recognized her name, having read and perhaps owned her books. Lynne is the Artist-in-Residence at the nearby Bosque Eterno de los Ninos Reserve, so we were delighted that she was willing to make a presentation to our younger students.

In her presentation, Lynne shared how much she like the forest behind the house where she grew up. She explained how from very early on, she learned to appreciate nature. As she grew up and learned how much of nature is threatened, those early experiences with nature helped to propel her into action to protect the environment.

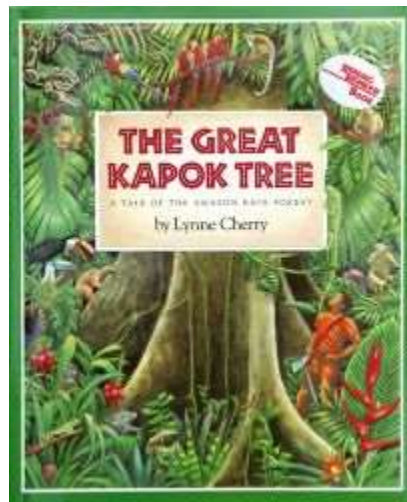
Following the success of her first book, *The Great Kapok Tree* in the 1990's, Lynne's interest was piqued by hearing of the Wood Thrush bird and its migration twice a year of over 2,000 miles from eastern United States to southern Central America. Through some personal connections, Lynne learned one of its stopping points along the way is Monteverde, and she couldn't resist a trip to see the wood thrush at that point in its journey. Her trip was rewarded with sightings of the wood thrush in Monteverde. Her book, *Flute's Journey: The Life of a Wood Thrush* grew out of that experience.

As busy as Lynne has been in publishing many books over the last three decades, she has somehow found the time to create and staff a non-profit organization devoted to taking her environment message to young people. [Young Voices for the Planet](#) has fostered the development of a series of films aimed at engaging young people in protecting the environment and provides curriculum material for teachers. She has served as artist-in-residence for numerous environmental organizations over the last 30 years, including the Smithsonian National Museum of Natural History and the Princeton Environmental Institute.

We are deeply honored to have such a famous and vibrant person present at our school!



Lynne Cherry.
Here's her [web page](#).



*Lynne's first and most popular book,
on the Amazon rainforest.
Her research for the book included a stay in the
Amazon rainforest to experience it for herself.*

Seeking a Tour of Our School?

With so many people visiting Monteverde, we are getting many requests for tours of our campus. We are delighted that so many people are interested in us!

Our small staff -- just two administrative staff who can give tours in English--tries to accommodate as many as possible. We do get a bit overwhelmed, so we hope people will understand if we can't fit their schedule.

Visitors are welcome to attend our Mid-week worship with all of our students on Wednesdays from 9:00 to 9:45, and chat with us during the recess that follows. All are welcome to explore the campus when school or Meeting events are not in session.

We cannot bring visitors into classes, as we want to minimize distractions for our students.

Serenaded by the Mountain View (CA) High School Chorus



For many years, a choir from Mountain View (CA) High School has visited MFS for a chance for students to interact casually and for the choir to offer a performance.

It used to be an annual event, but with the pandemic we hadn't seen them since 2019. So it was a delight to welcome them this month!

All 42 of the choir members, a teacher and a few parents arrived to join us for lunch. That provided a casual time for our students to interact with their students and share experiences.

Our whole school had a special time after lunch to watch and hear the Mountain View Choir perform. The concert included a number of pieces, but perhaps the most interesting was a song that they taught to our students. The song was in Swahili, with the title *Amani Utupe na ustawi* — Give Us Peace and Courage.



Welcome Back, International Volunteers!

If we were to accept the many generous but short-term volunteer offers we receive, we would have constant turnover in our small school community. We opt instead to prioritize stability for our students, requiring that volunteers work with us for at least a term (3 months) and that they bring skills and experience that fits with our classroom needs.

Since that requirement narrows the field a lot, we truly value the volunteers who do spend longer, and especially those who return year after year so that they are familiar to our students and fit right into our classes. We are very fortunate that we have several volunteers who fit these requirements, and are especially grateful to have them back this year.

Kenna Manos, a retired college professor from Nova Scotia, spends about 6 months with us each year, covering about a term in each of our two semesters. For over 15 years now, she has assisted in our 5/6 classroom, working closely with teacher Amy Cherwin. Kenna divides her time between working with our students and heading back to her grandchildren in Canada.

Others who are with us for January through March include:

Don and Liz Tanner from British Columbia began volunteering with MFS in 2011, shortly after they retired from teaching positions. Don formerly taught math, so we often find him tutoring older students on their math assignments. Liz's background as an elementary school teacher make her a great fit for our 1/2 and 3/4 class. Liz even volunteered by Zoom, developing a poetry group for the 3/4 class during the pandemic.



From the left: Don and Liz Tanner, Pau Angell, Kenna Manos and Maureen Dobbie

Paul Angell from Vermont brings us his career-long skills as a special education teacher and a behavior specialist. He is a great help each year, sometimes doing assessments, and sometimes helping directly with students in need of individual attention. He has been volunteering with MFS since 2003 and spent the 2005-6 school year as our MFS Special Ed teacher.

Maureen Dobbie from Michigan first volunteered at MFS in 2019 and found her special place to volunteer is in our pre-school. With 25 students in our pre-K, Kinder and Preppa classes, lead teacher Melody Guindon is delighted to see Maureen each year! Maureen wasn't able to join us during the pandemic years, but joined our colegio class by Zoom for the sessions on spirituality that we offered instead of mid-week Worship. Maureen did a great session for that class, explaining the Sikh religion and what drew her to become a Sikh.

We are so lucky to have these volunteers year after year!

