



It's not often that you can pinpoint the date a community is born.

But in 1968, in a church in Okemos, seven families with 18 children between them invested in a different type of education, that was pioneered by Maria Montessori.

As the oldest Montessori school in mid-Michigan, its alumni are measured in the thousands. But, the school measures its success by preparing its students for a lifelong adventure with learning and love for people and the earth.

Montessori Radmoor is more than a building. It's a testament to what happens when people reach for the best possible educational method for their children.

**Founders' Day in the
Children's Peace Garden**

On Founders' Day, Sept. 7, activities included a ribbon cutting for the installation of the Founders' Pergola to honor the seven founding school families. From left, Parent Guardian Association member Sonji Revis, Tom and Barb Astley, administrator Susie Hyatt (with giant scissors), Maxine and Jake Ferris, and Board of Trustee members Autumn Romig and Mary Doster celebrate in the garden constructed to honor the service of Susie Hyatt.



**Anniversary Golden Gala
announces 50 for 50 partnership**

Dr. John (Jake) and Maxine Ferris celebrated the vision of their fellow founding families at Montessori Radmoor School by announcing a funding match by the Ferris family for the "50 for 50" campaign to celebrate the school's 50th anniversary.

"We have been at the forefront for many years," said Maxine at the September Radmoor Golden Gala, "because we believe so much in the quality of Montessori Radmoor School and the opportunities it has provided. But, the time has come for us to step back and let others lead, and our family has pledged to match the proceeds



The Golden Gala allowed for founding families and friends to gather, including (from left) Robyn Radway and Erica Radway Krueger, daughters of Lila Radway, Ralph and Tina Votapek, Bonnie and Richard Radway, Maxine

raised by the school. What we hope is that those families who see the investment in their lives will say 'Count Me In!'"

The **50 For 50 campaign**, "Preparing, Connecting, Transforming," hopes to raise \$50,000 this academic year to to propel Montessori Radmoor School forward by funding new initiatives and growth while maintaining the core Montessori principles of the school.

One of the founding families in 1968, the Ferris children were among the 18 students enrolled those early years. The school began in an Okemos church. Maxine spoke of the efforts to equip classrooms and hire teachers and recruit students.

"What an incredible legacy the founders of Montessori Radmoor have left us and we are grateful," says Jay Salliotte, President of the school's Board of Trustees, "and we are poised to take that and grow."

For information about contributing to the 50 For 50 campaign, [click here](#). Funds donated through the end of the school year may be eligible for matching funds.



and Jake Ferris and Barb and Tom Astley.

Founders of the School

*Thomas and Barbara Astley
Leroy and Elizabeth Augenstein
Dr. John and Maxine Ferris
Dr. Samuel and Amelia (Pat) Moore
Kenneth and Sarah Olsen
Louis and Karen Smith
George and Elizabeth Stranahan*

Significant Contributor

Lila Radway

Through the Years

1968: The Children's House open with a single preschool class at Okemos Community Church.

1969: Two more preschool classes added and school moves St. Johns Student Center East

1974: Land purchased at 2745 Mt. Hope Road, Okemos

1976: School opens in new building on Jan. 5th

1981: Dedication of elementary school addition which was later renamed Radmoor School, to honor service of Lila Radway and Amelia (Pat) Moore

1988: Library named for benefactor, Dr. Louis Romano

1990: Addition of gym and toddler room completed

2003: Second toddler room and new entrance built

2010: Greenhouse, known as "Serra Calda", constructed

2017: Children's Peace Garden dedicated to Susie Hyatt for 25-years of service

2018: 50th Anniversary and installation of Founders' Pergola

Celebrating Lila Radway and family

Lila Radway, one of the leaders who sought to expand the school from preschool into elementary, was an artist, fashion model and tireless volunteer.

Her name adorns the school's scholarship program: Lila Radway Scholarship. She shared her love of education with her daughters, Erica Radway Krueger and Robyn Radway.

Erica Radway Krueger

One of the first attendees of the school, Radway Krueger remembers those traditional hallmarks of a Montessori school.

As an adult while she was researching Montessori schools for her son, she said, "I remember the strong feeling I had when I



saw the pink tower at that school, and I saw those pink blocks and my heart just opened. Until this day, I'm still a very hands-on learner." Roadway Krueger is a massage therapist.

"I have been very excited about experiencing all of the 50th anniversary celebrations and events," says Radway Krueger. "Somehow, it is bringing me closer to my mom who passed away in 2000. My son never got to meet his grandmother and with all these celebrations which include recognizing mom's contribution to the organization, I am thrilled to share that with my son."

Robert Banks honoring Lila Radway for her work.

Robyn Radway

"Montessori helped me gain confidence in myself," she said. "I learned to do things on my own. Montessori was the beginning of my everything. Those years at Montessori were the most formative years of my life."

Her memories include her teachers, Miss Shireen and Miss Alice, and the pink tower and the number beads.

"The beads were different colors. Later I learned that those beads were helping me learn the decimal system and math. To this day, I just love math. I do math for a living," said Radway, a tax preparer and accounting specialist.



6th Annual Race for Radmoor

The 6th Annual Race for Radmoor kicked off Sept. 30, complete with a Toddler Trot and a Mile Run, followed by a 5K event, which happened to be won by the dad on the right, Mr. Conn.

Alumni Feature - Ben Brann, Haslett High senior

How did Montessori prepare you for high school and beyond?

Montessori taught me a lot. It taught me how to be independent and to have a constant love of learning. In Montessori I learned to not always follow the norm and follow my own path. I also learned how to treat others with respect, and relate with them on a deeper level, which I believe are skills many bigger public schools lack.



What advice would you give to parents of elementary students about Montessori elementary programming?

For the parents of Radmoor, it is really important to keep in touch with the Radmoor community even after you leave because it's like an extended family; they will always be there for you and will always have your back. I can speak from experience: I will always have ties to Radmoor. My best friends are from Radmoor and they are like brothers that I have known for a lifetime.

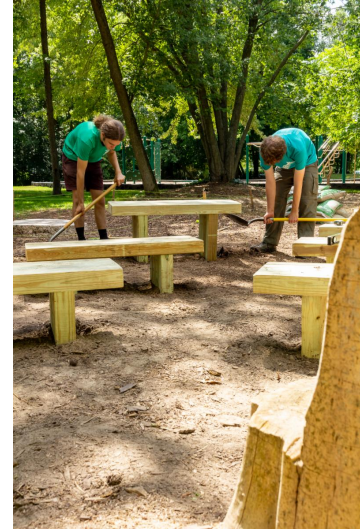
What are your favorite Montessori Radmoor memories?

There are a plethora of memories that I could go on about: going to the annual elementary trip to camp Miniwanka was always a great time, building forts in the woods for recess, and playing soccer with whomever wanted to play. I also remembered playing in the woods after school. Another thing I will never forget would be the Pokemon cards that just about everyone had and would keep safe for after school. I am sure that some of the teachers built their own collection of cards over the years.

Scouts return to alma mater for Eagle scout projects



Radmoor alumni family Sam Winkler (left), along with brother Gabe and sister Addy, built a bridge.



Alum Brady Russell (left) works on Jesse Munson's Eagle Scout bench project.

Two Boy Scout alums returned to Montessori Radmoor for outdoor projects in 2018 and combined to donate more than 200 volunteer hours in labor and materials for the school.

Sam Winkler led a team that built a bridge on the east side of the property. Jesse Munson and a team constructed benches within a garden that celebrates the service of administrator Susie Hyatt. Winkler and Munson were classmates at Radmoor and did the projects for their Eagle Scout awards.

Munson attended Radmoor's elementary program from 2nd through 5th grades. Winkler attended through 4th grade. Both Eagle Scouts are now age 18 and members of Troop 125 in Okemos. This is not the first Eagle project at the school. Glenn Miracle helped to create a nature trail on the grounds of the school in the 1980s.



Radmoor's Head of School to step down after 28 years of service

After 28 years of service, Susie Hyatt will step down as Head of School at the end of the academic year (June 2019). Hyatt has played an integral part in the school's growth and success and is credited with supporting the school's mission as an authentic Montessori program, increased enrollment, parent education, and the expansion of school facilities during her tenure.

Hyatt shares, "Entering my 28th year with the school, I have been contemplating my contributions to the community, as well as, my future direction and energy; I feel this is the appropriate time to pass the reins to the next generation and plan to do so at the end of this school year."

According to Board President Jay Salliotte, "It has been our great pleasure to work hand-in-hand with Susie to support the children and staff of the Montessori Radmoor School. While we will hate to see Susie go next year, we know our roots are strong and firmly planted, and as a community, we will continue to thrive under new leadership."

The Executive Committee of the Board of Trustees has mapped out a transition plan. Salliotte mentions, "We have named a transition committee with representation from parents, staff, and Board to get the ball rolling; however, there will be opportunities along the way for all community members to provide feedback. As we begin our search for a new Head of School, we are committed to making this process as reasonably open and transparent as possible."

"The families, staff and school mean a great deal to me." Hyatt continues, "I have had the pleasure of watching the growth of an amazing group of educators and nothing can adequately express the joy in watching the children grow and develop into contributing members of our society."

For more information about Montessori Radmoor School or the Head of School position, please contact Irina Jamison, Director of Business Operations at (517) 351-3655 or visit

Dates to Remember

Montessori Education Week

February 24-March 2, 2019

Year-End Picnic and Alumni Open House

Friday, June 7, 2019

Montessori Radmoor | (517) 351-3655 | www.MontessoriRadmoor.org

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