



# COTTON TALES

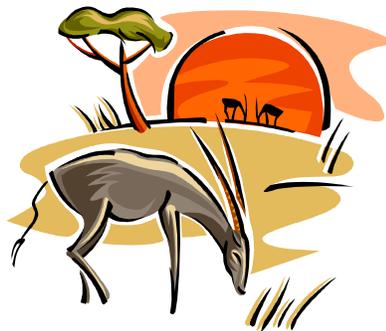
*It takes a village to raise a child. -African Proverb*

## From the Director...

Jambo! Welcome to, and back to, the Cottonwood village! We're heading out on **SAFARI** this year because we're **WILD ABOUT LEARNING!** This year's geography and social studies curriculum will take us through Africa in the first semester and Australia and the Pacific Rim in the second semester. Our expedition gathers early on August 20 at 8:30 a.m. for a fortifying pancake breakfast at our base camp before we join up with our tribes for the 2016-2017 school year. An African tribe can be thought of as a kind of

circle, the kind we mean when we speak of a "circle of friends." Your child's classroom will become his tribe; and his classmates and teachers, his clansmen and elders. Each classroom will link us to the broader Cottonwood community creating the strong village we need to support children and families in modern times. Research shows that the stronger the relationship, the deeper the learning, so not only is it an engaging way to explore the world and include you parents in

the journey, it is a valid form of educational theory that allows our students to delve in and fully immerse themselves



in their personal and cultural discoveries. We can't wait to see you all and get started on this year's expedition!

Ms. Trish Nickerson

## Upcoming Events:

- Tax Free School Supply Days-Aug 5-7
- Staff Orientation and Prep-Aug 8-19
- Rub-A-Dub-Aug 13-Help clean the school from 8-4
- Toddler Classroom Orientation w/Ms. Amy and Ms. Pam Aug 9-19, by appointment
- Parent/Child Orientation &Pancake Breakfast Aug 20 at 8:30 am
- First Day of School! Monday, August 22
- Senior Elementary Campout August 25-26
- First Burrito Day and Sing Along-Sept 2 @ 8:30AM!
- School closed for Labor Day on September 5. No childcare available.

## Orientation & Pancake Breakfast Aug, 20 at 8:30 am

You won't want to miss this year's Parent/Child Orientation on Saturday, August 20 at 8:30AM! Be sure to mark your calendar for this special "Meet and Greet" so that you and your children can get acquainted with their teachers and see their



new classrooms. We'll be serving pancakes at 8:30AM followed by a storytelling session with local griot, Ramona King, at 9AM. Classroom meetings for parents will begin after the

presentation of staff at 10:00AM and will be immediately followed by a scavenger hunt around our beautiful campus! Come out and greet one another, meet new staff and families, and visit with our CSPA representatives. We're in for a glorious year together! **Let's Safari!**

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# Tax Free School Supply Days Are August 5-7

It's time for the annual Back to School Tax Free Holiday!

Coming soon to a retail store near you is the annual New Mexico Gross Receipts Tax Holiday. This year it's held on August 5-7, and if you have school-age children, it's nothing short of a bonanza. For that weekend the state suspends collection of gross receipts tax on sales of qualifying items so you can buy the items tax free. Because many merchants also absorb the tax on a number of non-qualifying items, you are the beneficiary all around.

The tax holiday begins at 12:01 a.m. on August 5, 2016 and concludes on August 7, 2016 at midnight.

During that time the law provides a deduction from gross receipts for retail sales of qualifying tangible

personal property; in effect allowing the retailer to sell the items "tax free."

B-200.18, List of Taxable and Non Taxable Items for New Mexico's Gross Receipts Tax Holiday contains a list divided into categories, but please note that within some categories there is a set dollar



Bahati ikipiga hodi ni lazima ufungue mlango mwenyewe.

"When good fortune knocks you have to open the door

maximum. To qualify for the deduction, clothing or shoes must be priced at less than \$100 per unit. The price limit for desktop, laptop, tablets or notebook computers is \$1,000, and for related computer hardware it is \$500. School supplies for use in standard, general-education classrooms must be under \$30 per unit. There are items specifically excluded by statute in all categories. Those items are always taxable.

[www.tax.state.nm.us](http://www.tax.state.nm.us).

## Rub-A-Dub, Come Help Us Scrub!

The teachers will begin working on classrooms on **August 13th** this year. We'd love some help wiping off shelves and knocking down the cobwebs after a long summer sleep. If you have any time to give between 8:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. on Saturday, August 13th, please drop by the school and we'll put you to

work raking, painting, dusting and polishing the campus until it shines. We will be working both inside and out. Please bring a bucket and rags with you so that we are sure to have enough to go around. Children are welcome but must be supervised by their parents.



Umoja ni nguvu, utengano ni udhaifu.

"Unity is strength, disunity is weakness."

Swahili Proverb

## Meet Our 2016-2017 Tribal Elders!

We have assembled a dynamic group of educators to head up our programs this year. Here is the 2016 lineup...

### Senior Elementary 4th-5th

Julia Hayes, Amanda Herman w/ Erin Patrick

### Junior Ele 1st-3rd grade

Corinne Matthes/Audrey Scott  
Joy Reese/Taylor Black

### Early Childhood 3-6 years

Elizabeth Mckinley/Jillian Bareford  
Estela Cross-Guillen/Stephanie Dennis

### Toddlers 2-3 years

Pam Gonzales/Angilece Ratliff  
Amy Appel/Tiffany Bravo-Wagner

### Aftercare

Elementary-Kellie Nickerson  
Early Childhood-Cyndi Roy

### Specialists

Art-Tricia Larese  
Drama-Kir Kipness and Lisa Fenstermacher  
Environmental Ed-Kristen Hatch and Becky Pierce  
Music-Moe Hickey  
PE-Kellie Nickerson  
Violin-Sarah Rhodes

## Family Communication @ [www.cottonschool.org](http://www.cottonschool.org), facebook & email

The Cottonwood School website, can be found at :

[www.cottonwoodschoo.org](http://www.cottonwoodschoo.org)

We use this site to offer information on the school to the general public. You can find our school calendar there under Parent information, along with current events, CSPA information and updates on school activities.

<https://www.facebook.com/TheCottonwoodSchoolInCorralesNm/>

You can find the school's Facebook page at the link above or by searching for the Cottonwood School in Corrales, NM. There is also a "group"

site called The Cottonwood School which we are trying to phase out. We post the same information on both sites, but you won't need an invitation to join the first one.

All other names are ghost sites created by people posting or tagging Cottonwood Montessori. You can LIKE us at Cottonwood School in Corrales, NM to get up to date info.

[trish@cottonwoodschoo.org](mailto:trish@cottonwoodschoo.org)



Stay up to date on school news and

Our Director, Ms. Trish Nickerson, will send out email updates every Monday to inform you of school events and activities, to clarify questions and to send attachments thus cutting down on our paperwork. If you are not receiving the weekly updates, please call the office to verify your email address, then check your junk folder to make sure we have permission to send you informatioin. You can do that by putting school email addresses in your contacts.

Your teacher will also send out a weekly update of classroom updates!

## What's New at School This Year?

Each year we strive for excellence and continuous improvement in the programming and services we offer our students and their families. Here is what to expect this year:

- We have added a gardening teacher for the Senior Elementary! Becky Pierce will be joining Kristen Hatch in developing our gardening program. She will be focusing on building a bee colony this year.
- We have hired Kir Kipness and Lisa Fenstermacher from Aux Dog Theater Company to run our drama programs. Lisa will work with Toddlers through Kindergarten and Kir will work with 1-5th graders. You can read all about them on page 4.
- Our Junior elementary team of Susan Black and Michelle

Fonseca have accepted positions at other schools, so Corinne Matthes and Joy Reese will be stepping in to take over the 1-3 classes.

- Family Counselor, Danielle Cossett, will be offering 3 hour parent education lectures on The Nurtured Heart Approach for new families. You can sign up for the classes with Moe Hickey.

## Fundraising Totals for 2015-16 School Year

Our donors were very generous last year, helping us to raise over \$80,000 thousand dollars for school improvements and the general fund. We rely on this income to make ends meet each year as tuition only covers 80% of our annual expenses. We hope to double that amount this year by consolidating our efforts into a few short campaigns spread out over the school year starting with our annual fund which we hope will raise \$100,000 in donations to the tuition deficit. It's a wonderful



**\$82,532**

opportunity for our families to donate funds which may have been received through discounts or scholarships, back to the school. Gifts to the school are tax deductible, but tuition is not, so each gift received will help us to raise money not covered by tuition. If you would like to make a gift to the school please call the school Director, Trish Nickerson at 239-1765 or write to her at: [trish@cottonwoodschoo.org](mailto:trish@cottonwoodschoo.org)

221	amazon smile
5000	auction
4039	burritos
53510	donors
2500	fun run
13000	intel
1000	read-a-thon
509	school pics
2753	united way

## Hello Drama Team!



**Kir Kipness** will be working with the 1-5 graders. Kir's love of performing arts runs back to her

grandfather, Joseph Kipness, who was a Tony award-winning producer for Applause in 1970. She grew up in the world of theater, performing and training since age 5. She has a prolific performing résumé and extensive professional, artistic training. However, her joy of performing is nothing compared to her love of teaching and directing. Kir is a licensed NM teacher with a degree in Theatre Education from UNM. She has been teaching theatre for 10 years now at various institutions including: UNM Theatre Classes for Young People, New Mexico Jazz Workshop, Play

Conservatory, Truman Middle School, and Montessori of the Rio Grande Charter School. She is incredibly passionate about the power that theater has to help youth find self-actualization and expression.



**Lisa Fenstermacher** will be working directly with the Toddlers and Early Childhood classes. Lisa earned her CDA Child Development Associates from CNM and is a graduate of the University of New Mexico's Department of Theatre and Dance where she earned a BFA in Theatre Education. She has

been acting in Albuquerque for over 35 years and has 25 years teaching experience, including acting Coach for Albuquerque Children's Theatre, guest teaching artist for New Mexico Young Actors, acting teacher for UNM's children's theatre program, served as artist intern for N4th Arts Center's Equilibrium Theatre Company through Americorps, and acting coach and Director with Play Conservatory. Currently she is a Director of Acting and Voice and has written and produced her own musicals including Magic The Musical, Cupids Diner and Karaoke Beach Party. She is a member of Siren 13 Film and Media Company. She believes the greatest gift you can give a child is exposure to theatre; it is the key to a whole new world of imagination and limitless possibilities.

## Meet Joy Reese, our new 1st-3rd grade teacher!

Greetings, Cottonwood families! This year will be my ninth year as an elementary lead teacher and my fourth year as a Montessorian. I graduated from the University of Missouri-Columbia with a Bachelor's degree in English and received my teacher certification from the Teacher Academy at Santa Fe

Community College. I trained at the New Mexico Center for Montessori Education and am a member of the American Montessori Society. My Montessori journey began as a parent, when my now 9 year old son attended a Montessori preschool. I fell in love with the philosophy and left my job in traditional education

in order to pursue a path in Montessori education. I am eager to meet you and your children and I look forward to continuing on the path of individual, high-quality education with you.

7 years Laguna Elementary School  
1 year Sage Montessori Middle School  
4 years Montessori Elementary Charter  
NM K-8 Level II License

## Violin Measurements & Rentals for K-5th Graders

Here are a few things to know about starting the violin program at Cottonwood this fall. Your child will not need a violin for several weeks. Violin classes will begin after Labor Day. At that time, I will measure each child and give directions to you regarding violin size and any other supplies that will be needed. Rentals for instruments will be done through Robertson and Sons Violin Shop [www.robertsonviolins.com](http://www.robertsonviolins.com) and will

cost around \$16/month. **Please hold back on renting your violin until you have heard from me.** Your child's instrument will remain in the school until we teach them how to take care of it. These are expensive little things, and I want to be sure the children understand how fragile they are before they are sent home.

Each child will receive a group lesson at school each week. I do offer private lessons after school if that is

something you feel would benefit your child. As the classroom lessons get underway, I invite you to stop by and observe the wonderful world of Suzuki violin. I am available to you at [fiddlertwit@yahoo.com](mailto:fiddlertwit@yahoo.com) for any questions.

Happy fiddling!

Sarah Rhodes  
Suzuki Violin Instructor

## How Does Her Garden Grow? Meet Becky Pierce!

I am so excited about working with Kristen Hatch in a Montessori learning environment that embraces school gardening.

I studied Horticultural Therapy in Denver from 2000-2002 and earned the second tier of certification, HTA. After that I practiced Horticultural Therapy for 8 years in Albuquerque, working with elderly residents in group homes, and adults with developmental disabilities in day programs. I also started and ran a floral business for 12 years in which I grew some of the floral product in my home gardens.

I studied and completed a bachelor's degree in Elementary Education at UNM

while raising my children and growing food. I am a licensed Special Education teacher who most recently worked at Eagle Ridge Middle School in Rio Rancho where I was also the school's environmental liaison and Garden Club teacher. I have built gardens and taught gardening at most of the schools at which I have worked. As an avid organic gardener, orchardist, composter, bee keeper, chicken keeper, and environmentalist, I embrace many Permaculture methods in my own gardens.

My passion is gardening! My belief is that gardening, like learning via the Montessori method, is a process best learned by experience, and that experiences cultivate curiosity. The possibility of gardening with children in a learning environment appeals to me viscerally. Supporting our children's connections to their food, health, community and environment supports their growth in all areas of their lives.

From teaching to building to growing, I have a wealth of experiences to share with Cottonwood and I am eager to meet the members of this joyful learning community.

## Front Parking Spot is UP FOR AUCTION!

We neglected to add the FRONT PARKING SPOT to our end of year auction in May so it is going on the block...TODAY! As soon as you read this, email Ms. Trish at [trish@cottonwoodschool.org](mailto:trish@cottonwoodschool.org) to put in your bid for a front door parking spot reserved just for you from August to August for all events.

If you are tired of lugging strollers, snack, backpacks and kiddos through the hot, dusty parking lot, then this deal is just for you.

The bidding will start at \$2000 and go up from there. It will include a custom sign with your family's name on it, and full access to door front parking, come rain or shine, for one school year!

Your donation, as always, is tax deductible and your gift will be used toward the annual fund to help with general expenses. We look forward to receiving your bid and affording you the luxury of a front door parking space for the 2016-2017 school year!

## Beautify the Campus in 2016!

It's our BIRTHDAY so we are inviting you to bring us a gift from our wish list to donate to our Beautiful Campus Campaign.

Our overall goal for the school this year is to beautify the campus with glorious color and objects of interest!

We will be collecting pots and seeds and bulbs from various sources, along with paint, lumber and sculpture!

Our CSPA will be joining us in this venture by helping us to fund new bee boxes, flower beds, murals and seating areas.



Dugan's on Alameda and 4th Street is going out of business so they are reducing their wares by over 50% off.

We have selected a few items in a variety of sizes and prices for you to choose from.

Just stop by Dugan's and tell them you are shopping for Cottonwood School and they will point you in the right direction.

Or you can choose from a wide selection of benches, pots, planters, sculptures and décor to spruce up our buildings, patios, gardens, playgrounds and campus!

It's the perfect time of year to pick up materials at the end of summer sales around town so keep an eye out for us and we will hunt for those bargains with you.

You can also leave a check for your designated donation at the front desk and we will purchase what we need!

THANK YOU FOR YOUR HELP!

<b>August 13</b>	<b>Rub-A-Dub Day 9-3</b>
<b>August 20</b>	<b>Student/Parent Orientation in MPR 9:00 AM</b>
<b>August 22</b>	<b>First Day of School! Welcome Back!</b>
<b>August 24-26</b>	<b>4<sup>th</sup> thru 6<sup>th</sup> Grade Parent/Student Retreat</b>
<b>Sept 5</b>	<b>School Closed for Labor Day Holiday</b>
<b>Sept 9-10</b>	<b>FOLKLORE &amp; SNORE-Jr. Ele CSPA Campout at Cottonwood</b>
<b>Sept 14</b>	<b>First Parent Meeting-Pizza Potluck 6-8 PM in MPR</b>
<b>Sept 23</b>	<b>Annual Grandparents and Grandfriends Family Picnic 11:30-1:30</b>
<b>Sept 27</b>	<b>Middle School Night in the MPR at 6:30 PM-subject to change</b>
<b>Sept TBA</b>	<b>SCHOOL PICTURE DAY! 8-1</b>
<b>October 3</b>	<b>Classroom observations begin</b>
<b>October 6-10</b>	<b>FALL BREAK-No School/Staff Inservice/Childcare on 7 only</b>
<b>October 21</b>	<b>Harvest Festival-5:30-9:30 PM</b>
<b>October 29</b>	<b>Open House 10- 2 PM</b>
<b>Oct 31</b>	<b>Halloween Parade</b>
<b>Nov 9 &amp; 10</b>	<b>Night of the Notables 6:30 pm in MPR</b>
<b>Nov 13</b>	<b>FIREBOLT FAMILY FUN RUN 9AM-12</b>
<b>Nov 20</b>	<b>PEACE CONCERT 2:00 p.m. at Simms Theater Alb. Academy</b>
<b>Nov 23-25</b>	<b>Thanksgiving Break-No School/ Childcare Wed/Fri only</b>
<b>Dec 2</b>	<b>READ-A-THON BEGINS AT SING-ALONG TODAY!</b>
<b>Dec 3</b>	<b>Starlight Parade and St. Nick's Bonfire in Corrales 5pm</b>
<b>Dec 5-9</b>	<b>CSPA BOOK FAIR IN MPR</b>
<b>Dec 14</b>	<b>Pajama Day</b>
<b>Dec 15 &amp; 16</b>	<b>Parent Conferences/School Closed-Limited childcare avail.</b>
<b>Dec 19-Jan 2</b>	<b>School Closed for Winter Break/Limited Childcare avail.</b>
<b>January 3</b>	<b>SCHOOL RESUMES- 2017 ENROLLMENT BEGINS</b>
<b>January 16</b>	<b>Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day, observed/No School/No Childcare</b>
<b>February 3</b>	<b>100<sup>th</sup> Day of School Celebration!</b>
<b>February 4</b>	<b>Curriculum Workshops and OPEN HOUSE 10am</b>
<b>February 14</b>	<b>Senior Elementary Valentine Tea</b>
<b>Feb 17-20</b>	<b>Presidents' Day Weekend/No School/Childcare on Friday only</b>
<b>February 23</b>	<b>Science Expo at the school 3-4PM</b>
<b>March 9/10</b>	<b>No school/closed for teacher inservice/childcare available</b>
<b>March 13-16</b>	<b>Elementary ITBS testing-mornings only</b>
<b>March 20-24</b>	<b>Spring Break! No school/limited childcare available</b>
<b>April 7</b>	<b>COTTONWOOD FOLLIES TALENT SHOW! 630-830PM in MPR</b>
<b>April 18-20</b>	<b>Jr El Plays Tues-Thurs</b>
<b>April 21</b>	<b>Sr.El Earth Day Project 9:30-3PM</b>
<b>April 25</b>	<b>CSPA General Meeting and Violin Concert</b>
<b>May 4/5</b>	<b>Parent/Teacher Conferences-No School/Limited childcare avail.</b>

**At Cottonwood, we strive to foster a strong and supportive parent-student-teacher community. We have several opportunities for parents to play active roles that greatly benefit the classroom and the school. You will be asked at the parent orientation to sign up for one of the volunteer positions listed below. Please preview the list of jobs to determine which tickles your fancy. We thank you in advance for your help and support!**

- **Room Parent**-The Room Parent will work closely with the classroom teachers in organizing field trips, class parties, fundraisers, special events, and volunteers. The Room Parent will be responsible for contacting families in the class through notes, letters, and phone calls whenever necessary and to enlist help. Room Parents will also liaise and coordinate with other Room Parents within a section and with the Parent Association section representative as needed for shared events and activities.
- **Phone Tree**-The Phone Tree parent will, as requested by the Director, school secretary, classroom teacher, or Committee Chairs, activate the phone-tree to contact all families in the class for communication of important and timely information.
- **Librarian**-The Librarian parent works with the classroom teachers in acquiring appropriate reading and research material from local libraries for the classroom. The teachers will provide either a book list or a topic of study on which the volunteer can base their selections. The school will be responsible for any lost or damaged books. The Library parent is responsible for returning books on time or getting an extension if needed.
- **Scrapbook**-The Scrapbook parent will document school-year events at the school and in the classroom through photographs and written material and will assemble the classroom scrapbook for the year-end annual auction. The Scrapbook parent will also provide digital copies of photos taken throughout the year to the class Yearbook parent.
- **Yearbook**-The Yearbook parent will collect digital copies of photos from other classroom parents throughout the year and upload to the Yearbook software site. Yearbook parents will be a member of the Yearbook Committee that is responsible to assemble the annual yearbook.
- **Hospitality**-The Hospitality parent will help to organize potluck suppers and/or carpools for families who are sick, experiencing significant hardship, or have recently given birth. Also works with the Director and the Hospitality Committee to help with teacher appreciation luncheon and gifts.
- **Laundry**-The Laundry parent will assist the classroom teachers in organizing the laundering of napkins, tablecloths, and nap sheets each week; and rugs, picnic blankets, pillows, and dress-ups as needed.
- **Pet Partner**-The Pet Partner will be responsible for taking care of the classroom pets, including: purchasing pet food, monitoring pet upkeep, cleaning cages once a week as needed, and making sure they are farmed out to good homes over the holidays, school breaks, and summer vacation. School will reimburse any expenses related to pet care, including veterinary.
- **Green Thumb**-The Green Thumb parent will make sure the classroom plants are kept healthy and that they are fed, watered, pruned, dusted and fertilized as needed.
- **Jack (or Jill)-of-all-Trades**-The Jack (or Jill)-of-all-Trades will assist with the general repair and upkeep of the classroom, furniture, materials and playground equipment as needed. Also helps with small-scale campus projects as a member of the Spruce-Up Committee.
- **Chef**-The Chef helps students in the class to prepare dishes for feast days and other celebrations, as requested by the teachers.
- **Safety Rep**-The Safety parent helps to monitor the parking lot before or after school to ensure the safe arrival and departure of students, parents, teachers and visitors to our school.
- **Materials Maker**-The Materials parent helps to create or refresh classroom materials, as requested by the teachers. Also helps coordinate and participates in Parent Work Nights to enlist other volunteers to fulfill teacher work orders for classroom materials.

## Important Contact Information for the School Year:

- Director**-Trish Nickerson 239-1765 trish@cottonwoodschool.org
- Principal**-Moe Hickey 980-9697 maureen@cottonwoodschool.org
- Office Manager**-Valerie Armenta 897-8375 val@cottonwoodschool.org
- Aftercare Building (BRICKHOUSE)** 897-3544 kellienickerson@hotmail.com
- **Facility Supervisor**-Shanual Brown 975-3259 chillywillie17@yahoo.com
  - **Family Coaching**-Danielle Cossett 615-0806 dcbalance@comcast.net
  - **CSPA President**-Becky Lard accreditedplumbing@gmail.com
  - **Hospitality**-Tammy Jones golfrocks@comcast.net

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## Pizza and Salad Potluck Mingler-September 14th at 6:00 p.m.

You're invited to a Pizza and Salad Potluck on Wednesday evening, September 15th at 6:00 p.m. in the multi-purpose room at Cottonwood School. We hope you'll take time out from your busy schedule to come out and play with the Cottonwood faculty. We'll be greeting new families, introducing our wonderful staff, and setting up some new projects for the coming school year.

All you have to do is drop the

kiddos off in the main building for free babysitting with our accomplished staff (you may want to leave a pizza behind for them too) and then head on over to the multi-purpose room for some shenanigans. No slides or power points, we promise! Just some great team building



Bring your favorite pizza or salad to the mingler & we'll REVIEW THE YEAR!

and fascinating people who will be sharing their projects, programs and vision for the year ahead! What do you want to see in our school? Come out and tell us what more we can do to improve our services. **Last names beginning with A-K- should bring drinks; L-S should bring pizza; T-Z should bring salad.** We'll provide the paper goods.