

For Maria

May 19, 2016

After 21 years at the Maria Montessori School its time for Mr. Fletcher to retire. This means I will miss the sun casting its light on the Wolf river harbor creating <sup>a cascade of</sup> shimmering sparkles ~~on its water~~. I will miss my cameo interactions with parents at carpool, while I assist their children into the primary classroom. I will no longer lead a small group of these same children into the outdoor environment, so positively charged with interesting water elements, migratory birds, an occasional eagle, fox, white pelicans, and Manny the manatee and the most beloved of all..... the rolie pollies. I will miss the wonderful energy radiating from the children even on rainy days when getting our boots on and being "ready for action" is prohibited.

On separate occasions I decided I wanted to work outdoors and with children. Maria Cole gave me the opportunity to do both. When I had an interest in track and field I was given the opportunity to conduct a javelin meet with our students. When I wanted to build playhouses that represented the architectural styles of six Memphis in May countries, the children and several grandparents helped to make it a reality. Hey, what about a barn raising, Amish style. Hey, what about a Regatta. Ditto.... green light to both.

The Maria Montessori school has given Fletcher Golden a place to grow, not only plants but hopefully a little as a human. Where else would I be addressed as Mr. Fletcher, by such a diverse assemblage of people. Where else would I be able to observe young people taking pleasure in the work assigned them.

This is a special place, a life reinforcing place. I only have positive feelings for my history here and believe its future will continue to shine like the brilliant light reflecting upon our backyard lagoon.