

December 2008/January 2009 Newsletter

Dear Parents at TCM,

Thank you for all your help this fall..... with sewing projects, publicity and preparing for the preschool open house and preschool night in Maynard, substituting in the classrooms and on field trips, the Firefly Book Orders, fundraising through Original Works, Photographs by Allie Cottrill and Learning Express. Special Family events such as the cocktail party and Gymboree for the younger children were also a success. Special thanks to several families for raking leaves and especially Maria and Themis Parados for the most amazing leaf removal job. Your time given to the school is so appreciated. The children and the program ultimately benefit from all your help. We have been able to offer several special enrichment activities through the Audubon Ark/Drumlin Farm and purchase/order new classroom materials and outdoor toys from your fundraising efforts. We hope to continue to offer a variety of specialists to our school! We look forward to your continued support in the upcoming weeks as well as into the New Year!

*Enjoy your holiday time with your friends and family. We wish you all a healthy and happy time now and in the New Year ahead!*

*From all of us at TCM,*

*Donna, Linda, Janet, Chris, Mary and Lillian*

**Dates to Remember and Reminders.....**

1. **The last days of school before the holiday break are Thursday, December 18<sup>th</sup> and Friday, December 19<sup>th</sup>. School will resume on Monday, January 5<sup>th</sup>.**
2. **On Tuesday night, January 6<sup>th</sup> at 5:30pm parents and older preschoolers are invited by MX School to come to the observatory to view the stars and the planets through their telescopes. Thanks to Karlyn McNall (Tim Cassidy's Mom) and Michael Schaeberle (Kassie's Dad) this opportunity is unique and special. There will be a few MX students there to help explain what they will see. You need to bundle up as it is on the roof and is accessible by stairs or elevator.**
3. **Another special invitation from MX School is for all the TCM children and families to come to the MX Theater on Sunday, January 12<sup>th</sup> at 1:00pm to see a children's play, Fairy Tale Courtroom, performed by MX students. Several of the students doing the play volunteered at TCM in the fall. Jordan is the Director and she is very excited about it and hopes that families will go**
4. **The Enrollment Committee is planning on sending out a brief survey to families regarding their plans for Summer and Fall '09 Enrollment. Applications for both summer and fall 2009 will be distributed to current families shortly. Our next Open House for prospective families is on Sat. Feb. 7<sup>th</sup> from 9 – 11am so please spread the word to any friends or neighbors who may be interested.**
5. **TCM Winter Party for Preschoolers (ages 4 and up!) Sunday, January 25<sup>th</sup> 3:30 – 5:30 pm at the Gymnastics Academy of Boston in Acton.** This event is supported by TCM's Fundraising money and organized by the Special Family Events Committee. A sign-up will be posted in the lobby and a flier will be in your mailbox. **This event is just for your older preschooler and includes a pizza party** for parents and children.
6. **Picture Days – Jan. 13<sup>th</sup> & 14<sup>th</sup>** Individual school pictures and class photos will be taken here at TCM in one of the Preschool rooms. These are inexpensive pictures that you can choose to purchase after they are developed within a few weeks. Northeast School Pictures is the name of the company and the photographer is Michael Lozier who we have known for over 15 years. Some of the toddlers and three year olds are sometimes fearful and if they get upset by the idea we will not force them to do it. Sometimes they watch for a while and then they think it is fun when they see that the photographer has some puppets and toys that make the kids laugh. The school receives

15% back from the total sales of the pictures so it is a small fundraising activity as well having a memorable keepsake for years to come of your child's first school.

7. **Remember to mark your calendars for February 8<sup>th</sup>, 1 – 3pm for the Annual Ice Skating Party and Winter Carnival at MX School. A Raffle along with some silent auction items will also take place at that time so there is something fun for current and Alum families. Like last year we will not only offer ice skating but we will also have activities in the Gym (after 1:30) for all ages including a moon bounce and a special visit from Animal Adventures! We hope more families will come and have fun even if you are non-skaters and/or have really young children.**

To donate items or services as a raffle item please email Terri Grant at [route66@aol.com](mailto:route66@aol.com) or leave her a note in Ashley's mailbox in the lobby.

8. **PLEASE BRING THE WINTER GEAR EVERYDAY!** We often do not know if and when we will be going outside because of the weather so please pack everything so we can have options. Sometimes it seems too cold in the early AM but then the sun comes out and if it is **32 degrees** or above we can go out. It makes it very difficult if all of the children don't have their boots, snow pants, etc. everyday. **THANK YOU!** Also, **some of the children like to have a pair of slippers to put on when they take off their boots in the lobby and that is okay with us.**
9. **Please call us if your child is absent due to illness so we can let others know what symptoms to be aware of.**

### **INFANT/TODDLER NEWS**

The dramatic play area has been very popular this year and the children will spend most of the day involved in whatever is set up in this area even as they participate in the other areas of the room. They have enjoyed playing in the store, going shopping and using the pretend money. We have had to make cars to go on trips and have added the large plastic house to go home to. The baby dolls have also played a big role in their imaginary play schemes as they have been taking them for walks in the strollers, carrying them around in the doll carriers and feeding them in the sassy seats or exersaucer. Since the children notice all the sibling babies coming with their mothers to drop off and pick up children at school, and because they are interested in Tyler and Kassie, the baby dolls continue to be popular props in their dramatic play scenarios.

Some of the art activities that the children have explored include finger painting, cookie cutter prints, pine cone painting, water colors, making play dough, leaf collages, easel painting with large sponge brushes, feather duster painting and fold-over prints. These activities along with our favorite tape, maker, colored pencils and play dough activities have kept us very busy.

#### **Favorite Books...**

Shake My Sillies out, Going to the zoo, Cookie's Week, Have You Seen My Cat?, It's Raining, It's Pouring, Noisy Breakfast, Baby Bear, Baby Bear, What Do You See?, Mr. Gumpys' Outing, The Gingerbread Man.

#### **Looking Ahead...**

The children have been really enjoying all of the different kinds of music we play throughout the day and will dance and clap to the different rhythms. They also have loved all the song books and these seem to be the most popular of all. To build on this interest in music we plan to display many different instruments to explore as well as make shakers, streamers and colorful headbands. The children will have the opportunity to pretend to be in a parade, play instruments along with music and sing lots of songs. All this music exploration will help to get out our energy as the days get colder. A large soft climber for climbing and sliding will also be set up for large motor activities.

## Reminders

- **In order to help keep the IT floors cleaner we again want to try having parents/sitters remove or cover their shoes with disposable shoe covers in the lobby before they enter the room. Then parents should remove their child's shoes/boots before they walk in as well and then put them in the kitchen/cubbie area. We would also ask parents to bring their child's slippers or socks with rubber soles to wear indoors as an alternative to wearing boots. Just plain socks are too slippery! It would be best to label all items. Thanks!**
- **If you have not brought in diapers and wipes recently, we could use some in sizes 4, 5 or 6.**
- **If your child is beginning toilet training. Please dress them in clothing that they can begin to pull up and down themselves. It is very difficult if they wear a onesie and need to go to the bathroom quickly.**
- **Please remember to bring in warm coats, hats and mittens so that your child can go outside to play.**

Mary & Lillian

## PRESCHOOL NEWS

The children have continued to be immersed in on-going seasonal activities during October and November. They have.....

- ❖ Explored fall colors in a variety of ways using sponges, dried flowers & weeds, feathers, corncobs, etc.
- ❖ Investigated a record player. "What does it do?" "How does it move?" The children used markers, pencils, chalk, crayons, paint with a variety of painting tools and eyedroppers to help them answer the above questions. We were also able to show the children how the record player plays music. Thanks to James, Tim and Cameron's families for sending in record albums to play and dance to.
- ❖ Learned about nocturnal animals; especially owls. We represented owls in a variety of different ways using clay, paint, feathers and drawing materials.
- ❖ Talked and read stories about nighttime fears such as the dark and monsters.
- ❖ Made a paper tree decorated with painted leaves (3 & 4 yr. olds) and forest animals (Pre-K).
- ❖ Worked on their fine motor skills using tongs and pom-poms, cutting clay & paper, gluing and finger-painting.
- ❖ "worked" at the TCM farm stand, made sale signs at the writing table using markers and magazine pictures, etc.

We ended the month with a great visit from the Audubon Ark. They brought a screech owl and a skunk (nocturnal) and a duck and a turtle (hatching animal). The children were fascinated that the skunk couldn't spray them!

Our TCM Player's production of **The Little Old Lady Who was Not Afraid of Anything** was a hit! The Pre-K children created the scenery and the props for the play.

We have noticed an overwhelming interest in the writing table recently. The 3 yr. olds are passionate about snipping and taping. They are becoming more comfortable at using scissors properly and safely. The Pre-k children have been adding pages to their journals and are interested in writing their own words!

Have you noticed some of the fantastic block buildings that have been created lately in the block room? We have been amazed at the creativity, cooperation, thought and planning of the children! We have been so impressed with the bridging and 3-story buildings with floors between each story they are making with such intricate detail, precision and design. After spending a long time building they gather a variety of materials to decorate and furnish their buildings. We see architecture and design professions in their future!

**THEATER NEWS.....**The Pre-K children enjoyed seeing the production of "If You give a Pig a Pancake and Other Stories." This production focused on 6 favorite children's stories with the theme about

being yourself and appreciating what you can do. The children were mesmerized by the talented young actors!

“Run, Run, as fast as you can...” We will be enjoying several versions of the gingerbread man story this month. We will use gingerbread play dough, make a giant gingerbread boy, baby and house out of a box, make our own gingerbread people at home, etc. We will also decorate a large gingerbread pretend cookie that will conveniently disappear and we will have to search for him in our school and we will be making spice dough gingerbread babies for the children to take home and hang in their rooms.

**REMINDER.....** We would appreciate it if you could have your child come with at least their winter jacket, hat, mittens, boots and snow pants each day. Unfortunately, due to space limitations we need to share cubbies and will have to ask you to put their labeled winter gear in their hallway cubbies and to take their winter gear home each day. We are sorry for this inconvenience but appreciate your understanding. Also, please remember to bring your child’s backpack in to their classroom hooks. Last year many parents were frustrated with losing their child’s snow pants, mittens and boots at TCM. **SO, PLEASE LABEL YOUR CHILD’S CLOTHING! We have a basket with a pen and masking tape on top of the preschool cubbies for your use.**

**SPECIAL NOTE.....** We are teaching your children to dress themselves independently. It is amazing how quickly the children learn to put their gear on with very little help from us. We would appreciate “kid-friendly” clothes that will make this process simpler for your child. Hopefully, the children will carry over their new found self-help skills at home.

**Wish List** - Old music boxes  
Buttons  
Small boxes (i.e., jewelry size)  
A bicycle wheel without a rubber tire  
Old Steering wheel

Have a wonderful, magical month!

The Preschool Team.....Janet, Linda and Chris