

TCM's March Newsletter 2009

Dear Parents,

Keep bringing those boots to school as we transition from the snowy to the muddy season at TCM! You may not like it but your children do love mud! Just think of it as part of our science curriculum as these seasonal changes take place. Please remember to pack extra clothes in the backpacks for messy mishaps! I am happy to report that in contrast to last year we are not reporting an epidemic of strep throat. Let's all try to stay healthy this spring.

On Feb. 7th we hosted our second and very successful open house with help from Kimberly Parke, the enrollment committee and the staff. Several new families were excited and enthusiastic about seeing their children so engaged in the environment and so comfortable in a new space. Many of them are joining the program this summer and next fall!

Last month we had a great time at our annual winter carnival! We are just gathering pictures of the event that we will display. Special thanks to Terri and Rob Grant for all their generous donations that made the raffle and silent auction so successful. Thank you to Sarah Smith and Kristi Lamont and the Special Family Events Committee who coordinated the children's activities and the presentation of the food, set-up and clean-up, etc. Thanks to all of you who donated items and purchased the tickets and to Maralee Glitzenstein and the Fundraising Committee. With the proceeds, the children have already benefitted by exploring a variety of new manipulatives and materials that the teachers have purchased. These have enhanced their play especially when we couldn't be outside as often with the cold temps. We are scheduling some special visitors to TCM and field trips in the weeks ahead that enrich the children's experiences and are available because of your support through TCM's fundraising efforts. We appreciate all that you do to help our school be unique and special and help children learn through their involvement and experiences.

As part of our recent survey we want to offer an additional week of school with a separate sign-up for that coming out soon. The last day of school is June 19 and not June 18. Then the following week we would offer the additional week of school from June 22 - 26. Then we would be closed from June 29 - July 3. The Summer Program would begin on July 6th.

Donna and Staff

DATES TO REMEMBER

March 16 - 20 - Vacation Week (TCM Closed) Next year there will be the option to choose your week to take off for vacation.

March 20th - Deposits due for Fall Enrollment; If you choose to pay by credit card you will need to stop by the office after the break. Summer applications for our "Wonders of Nature" summer program are due by April 1st for the lower rate; after April 1st there is a 5% increase in tuition.

March 27 - Parent Conference Day (TCM Closed) Please sign up for a time to meet about your child's progress.

April 19 - 25 - "Week of the Young Child" Every spring early childhood educators and programs use this (WOYC) to highlight the importance of quality care and education for young children and recognize the needs of children, their families and the teachers who work with young children everyday. "Bring TCM Together for Children, Children Bring TCM Together" is the theme. **We celebrate throughout the month of April at TCM with a variety of events.**

April 22 - Preschool Alumni Visit Day - Kindergartners (TCM Alums) will share information about what Kindergarten is really like with the children who will be attending Kindergarten in the Fall of 2009.

April 29 - TCM Science Night - 5:30 - 7:00pm for Preschoolers, Toddlers and Parents (More info to come)

May 2 - Spring Maintenance Day 9:00 - 12:00 Come and help spruce up our environment both inside and out! (More info/sign-ups later)

May 17 - Family Fun Day from 4 - 6pm - Pot Luck Supper - Moon Bounce - Face Painting - Spin Art and some special Musical Program that families will enjoy! Hope you can come to this special end of the year event that helps parents and children who are leaving TCM this year have fun together and bring closure to their year(s) here at TCM.

PRESCHOOL NEWS

Could Spring be right around the corner? We hope so! Though the cold has kept us inside quite a bit in the last two months, we have managed to stay very busy in the Preschool.

We have been very lucky to have Joe's Mom, Shannon, teach us yoga. We will be having a session with Shannon once a month for each group. The children are remarkably flexible!

The children worked very hard during January painting and decorating pottery and birdhouses for the Silent Auction for the TCM Winter Carnival. Thanks to all of the children for their help with this project!

We have thoroughly investigated snow and Winter during the month of February. We have.....

- ❖ read several books about Winter,
- ❖ played with snow in different ways at the sensory table
- ❖ painted snow and snowflakes using a variety of materials,
- ❖ "plowed" snow in the "Vehicle Snow Zone",
- ❖ watched snow melt and estimated how long it would take,
- ❖ made snow people and animals outside.

During January & February, Linda and Chris' group have.....

- ❖ read The Mitten by Jan Brett and enjoyed sequencing the story on a flannel board,
- ❖ painted using textured mittens,
- ❖ and made their own snow person/animal with white clay.

One of their favorite Winter songs is the following.....

"If all of the snowflakes were cookies and cupcakes oh, what a snow it would be. I'd go outside with my mouth open wide, ah, ah, ah, ah, ah!"

They also showed an interest in animals and animal sounds. They enjoyed making animal masks, playing an Animal Action game and reading Chameleon's Colors by Chiasato Tashiro and The Gruffalo by Julia Donaldson.

Linda and Chris' group will be looking forward to a field trip to Davis Farmland on May 5th (more info. to come).

The Pre-k group investigated snow in a variety of ways as well. They...

- ❖ learned about Snowflake Bentley and how he studied snowflakes and then they painted their own,
- ❖ used a survey to find out what type of snow activities the children liked the best,
- ❖ read the books.....All You Need to Make a Snowman by and Snowballs by Lois Ehlert. After reading these stories and others they gave their own directions on how to make a snow person or animal, worked on a giant snow girl using recyclables, dictated stories to pictures and photos of snow people doing different things and made their own snow person/animal using "snow clay."

Currently, the Pre-k group is studying different instruments and music and sound. We are also rehearsing two different plays.....This is Our House by Michael Rosen and The Little White Hen Makes Pizza. The children are studying their roles and making props for the plays.

The Pre-k is looking forward to a field trip to the Ecotarium (March 25th), April Fool's Joke Day, a visitor from "Down to Dirt" to teach us about recycling and worms (April 8th), Kindergarten Alumni Visit (April 22nd), Science Night (April 29th), Tom Chapin concert (May 8th) and our final field trip to Kimball's in June.

REMINDERS...

- ❖ We are in mud season through March and sometimes in to April. Please continue to send your child's boots and snow gear, if it continues to be cold and snowy.
- ❖ Please check your mailboxes daily for up to date information on future field trips and special visitors to the classroom.

SPECIAL THANK YOU TO.....

- ❖ Joe's Mom, Shannon for our yoga sessions...Om!...Om!
Also to Mat's Mom for sharing the marshmallow and toothpick project with us.

WISH LIST.....

- ❖ Boys and girls long pants size 4 & 5
- ❖ Is there anyone who would be interested in helping with spring gardening projects with the children?

HAPPY SPRING! Janet, Linda and Chris

IT NEWS

Welcome to March! Spring is just around the corner and we are all more than ready for warmer weather. The children have been able to go outside more often and we have had a few days that have been really mild. We hope this continues and appreciate the outdoor gear you have been sending for your children.

Since the winter break, the classroom environment has been changed often to keep up with the many evolving interests of the children. First we explored musical instruments, danced to different beats and made shakers, dancing ribbons and beautiful paintings while listening to music. The children enjoyed having parades, playing the drums and pushing the various buttons of the electric pianos and music blocks. Also the many song books that filled book corner were sung over and over until some of the children learned the songs by heart. Now after two months of singing we still have requests to hear their favorites again and again.

Some of the song books we have enjoyed:

- Down by the Station
- I've been working on the Railroad
- Going to the Zoo
- Row, Row, Row Your Boat
- Shake Your Sillies Out
- Knick, Knack Paddy Whack
- Wheels on the Bus
- There was an Old Woman who swallowed a Fly
- It's Raining, It's Pouring

In the last month we have added tools and hard hats to the dramatic play area. The children have enjoyed trying to fix things around the room and liked pretending to go to work. We also had a doll house out for the children to play with and fix but we noticed that no one was showing any interest in it at this time. Therefore, on the request of one of the children we took away the doll house and added a fire station and fire truck with boots, fire hats and hoses. The children have been very excited about this and the imaginary play and interaction between them has really shown how much they have grown since the beginning of the year.

Next month we will continue to explore the fire house and tools and will start to explore spring. We will make flowers out of different things, explore pastel colors and do some planting. Hopefully we will continue to spend more and more time outdoors and resume our walks at Middlesex.

We would like to thank the Lamont Family for all of the beautiful clothes donations for our clothes supply at school. Our IT extra clothes selection is amazing.

IT Reminders

- Thank you for remembering to remove or cover your shoes with the blue shoe covers on the table outside the IT door when entering the room. It has really helped to keep the floors clean.
- Please send in diapers and wipes as our supply has depleted.
- Please check your child's back pack to make sure that they have extra clothes or to see if they have bagged dirty clothing to be washed. We try to remember to tell you at pick-up but may forget if things get busy.
- It would be helpful for staff to know if your child has had a change in schedule. For instance, they were up late, didn't sleep well, teething issues or if they were sick over the weekend, etc.
- If your child is toilet training remember to dress them in clothing that they can pull up and down by themselves. We are always encouraging self help skills and this is a way to help them be self sufficient in the bathroom and builds their confidence during the process.

Thanks for all your help.....Mary and Lillian