

TCM APRIL/MAY UPDATE 2011

Dear Parents,

Welcome to Springtime at TCM! We are all excited to get outside again on a regular basis after what feels like the longest winter! In contrast, the next 12 weeks are full of activities, dates to remember and it will seem to all go so quickly. One of the winter highlights was the Winter Carnival. Special thanks to Jaimee Healy, Adrienne Principe and all of the parents who volunteered on the Fundraising/Special Family Events Committee. Thanks to Michael Schaeberle and Middlesex for the use of the ice rink and the Atkins Center for the bouncy house, the "Sing-a-Long and Drumming" with Tom Foote and space for the auction and refreshments. Approximately \$4000 was raised and it was fun to see so many of you as well as TCM Alum families return to support this great event.

This week, 4/11 - 4/15 is a nationally celebrated week known as "The Week of the Young Child" in many childcare organizations. Recognition of the needs of young children, their families and those who work professionally with young children are remembered. Our annual "Science Night" is usually in April but we have rescheduled it to **Wed. May 11th from 6:30 - 8pm**. We hope that the weather will be warmer and perhaps the Bubble Experiments and some other fun challenges can be done outdoors. Look for more info to come for preschoolers and their parent(s).

This past week, the Kindergarten Alums, were invited back to TCM to meet with their PreK friends and to share some of their thoughts about kindergarten. The PreK kids created a list of questions that they wanted to ask the panel experts. The alums shared some examples of their work or projects and then they took home their "Garden People" that they created at TCM last year as well as a DVD of their TCM plays. Many alum and prek parents met outside to share info informally about their kindergarten year so far. Thanks to Kendra Pavlik for contacting the families and Phyllis Bewick for organizing the beverages. As teachers, Janet and Linda were amazed at how much the kindergartners have grown and how confidently they expressed themselves. (Chris wasn't able to be here as she had knee surgery last week)

Maintenance Day is Sat. May 7th from 9 - 12. Sign-up sheets for attendance and child care requests will be distributed shortly. Families are expected to come to either the fall or the spring Maintenance Day. If you would like to attend both Days, those additional 3 hours can be used towards your 10 volunteer hours. Some parents have been doing "take home" projects in lieu of coming on that day. Other parents have volunteered to come in on another weekend to help during the school year. Please let us know if that works better for your schedules and we can make arrangements. As you know, some years, families choose for a variety of reasons to make a monetary donation in lieu of their volunteer time. This is also appreciated as the school always needs to replace equipment or purchase additional items. This spring we will continue to enhance the natural playscapes for the children by replacing more of the grass in the garden area with the "stepables" ground cover so as to keep it low maintenance.

Family Fun Day and Pot Luck is Sunday, May 22nd from 4 - 6 pm at TCM. All families are invited of course and there will be a sign up in the lobby for requested items and tasks. Parents are needed to help set up and clean-up both the children's activities as well as the pot luck for this

event. This is another opportunity for families to donate some hours to fulfill their 10 hour annual commitment. We will be inviting all new incoming families to TCM for the next school year and for some families we will be saying goodbye as their children move on to kindergarten.

May 26th - Final Field Trip to the Chelmsford Theater - Tom Chapin Concert

We are thankful to Middlesex transporting us to the theater again this year on their mini-bus with Paul Torres as our bus driver.

Davis Farmland - June 15th - End of the Year Field Trip for the Three and Four Year Olds

Permission slips with details will be going out for a field trip for the younger preschoolers to Davis Farmland. Parents are welcome to attend. If your child is going on a school bus field trip for the first time, parents are encouraged to come along. Please talk to Linda and Chris regarding any questions about this field trip. A school bus will be rented from Dee Bus Co. with seat belts. The field trip will leave TCM at 8:45 and return around 1:15.

Kimball's Mini-Golf Field Trip for the PreK Class in Westford - June 1st - to be confirmed

Because there are 12 PreK kids this year, the plan is to take the MX mini-school bus and the PreK parents will meet their children there to play mini-golf and have an ice cream. We choose to end the year this way because the meaning of a graduation ceremony is lost on young children and it is more meaningful to create a "memory" of the last days of preschool and have one last time together. The children look forward to playing golf. Being with parents and friends and enjoying a special treat to celebrate their "graduation" from TCM.

General Reminders for Spring Weather.....

*Before arriving to school please apply sunscreen * Send in a hat to wear outside *Apply bug repellent if necessary *Make sure that backpacks have seasonal changes of clothing *Make sure that children wear footwear that is good for climbing, running, riding trikes, and appropriate for sandy play *Send in rain boots if the sand is muddy

Curriculum Highlights

Briefly - the preschoolers will continue their exploration of dinosaurs and their interest level will determine how that theme will develop across the curriculum. The emergency center in the dress-up area has been an amazing venue for all ages. Thanks for your response for donating your old cellphones to add to the props - it has been so exciting! The toddlers continue their love of cooking in the "kitchen", taking care of babies and painting using all their senses. The next newsletter will highlight more of what the children have been working on in their groups. All of the activities, as you know, are carefully planned and are for pre-reading and pre-writing skill development and are challenging and fun.

We know that your schedules are busy so we hope that you will be able to join us with your children and families at many of the upcoming events at TCM.

Thanks for all your help with our activities in the weeks ahead!