

January 27, 2010

Dear Parents,

This is the last week of the month and the Wednesday Letter contains news from the specialty teachers. I will do my best to keep my part short and sweet so you can focus on what is happening with your children in their classes.

The news for the week:

*Food For Others has sent all of you a thank you for the food that you contributed over the holiday season. They weigh the food and then estimate that for each pound given equals a meal. Appletree donated 151 pounds! So, thanks to everyone 151 people received a meal. Beckie, our afternoon assistant that spear headed this drive sends her appreciation for helping the less fortunate in our community. Thanks to Beckie who brought the need to us.

*This Friday everyone will receive a progress report or report card upon pick-up of their child. Please digest the information presented to you, share it with your child and then bring it back to us along with the envelope at your earliest convenience so that it doesn't find its way to the black hole found in many homes or cars! If you have any comments, questions or concerns please don't hesitate to bring them to your teacher's attention or to mine. We are happy to set up conferences and answer any questions that you may have!

*Due to the progress reports and report cards issued Friday, we will distribute registration information on Monday, February 1st. Once again should questions arise please stop by the office and we will explain the answer. I do want to call to your attention that we will have 36 three year olds eligible for the 4 year old program. There are only 40 spaces available in the 4 year old program. We open the registration process to in house families on Monday, February 15th and then to anyone who has come to Appletree for a tour but not currently an Appletree family on Monday, March 1st. Also realize that we currently have 39 four year olds who will be eligible for our Kindergarten class. The maximum class size for Kindergarten is 20 students.

*I'd like to thank Cathy for sending us the 60 degree day on Monday! It must have come straight from St. Martin. What a winter gift!!!

Have a Beautiful Day,
katie

The Teachers' Turn

News from Miss Jenn's Bumblebee's

Last week, we learned about our friend Freddy Fish and the letter F. We also started our Fairy Tale unit. We have read and acted "The Frog Prince" and "Sleeping Beauty". This week we are learning about our new friend Gomer Goat... who eats silly things... and the letter G. We did our usual finger paint tracing of our letter, and we glued/painted our giant letter G green with green glitter and green grapes... let's hope the grapes stay up! Have a wonderful week!

News from Mrs. Diana's Cottontails

Well now that testing is done, we have started enjoying our medieval theme. The Cottontail boys have decorated their shield and sword, the girls have started sewing beads on their skirts and they all have been encouraged to decorate a crown. We will all get dressed for our feast on Friday (of course I will take pictures), but they have been able to play with everything until then. I will be providing some chicken legs, hard-boiled eggs, raisins, nuts, grape juice (they drank wine) and fruit for the feast. I didn't realize that Ms. Melodee is serving lasagna for lunch, so we may actually have to use spoons to eat that part. It should be fun! I hope everyone saw how cute the princesses and knights are on our bulletin board – we even have our very own sorcerer (made by Ms. Sarah) on top of our castle. Of course the boys like the dragons the best. We have a new friend this week – Nicky Narwhal. If you don't know what a narwhal is (I didn't until I started at Appletree), he is a whale that has a very, very long tooth that sticks out from his nose area. The children originally guessed that he was a swordfish, and if you look at his picture you can see why. He lives in the

Arctic Ocean and is about the size and weight of a car. They are learning about his blowhole, why he needs his blubber, what kind of diet he has, that he is a mammal, how and why they live in pods and how they speak to other whales. If you are looking for something to ask your child in the car, you may be surprised by what they have learned. It is always fun to learn about something that is out of the ordinary. The vocabulary words for the song are nest and net and nickel, nose and nurse and numbers. We are gluing on noodles and pieces of newspaper to letter N's. Of course we have our "N" tracing available also. We are also having fun with colored rice and scoops in the media table, trying to screw on different size lids to containers, and planting some seeds. We are planting seeds so we may be able to take care of them (last weeks value) and then we need the patience (this weeks value) to see if they will grow. Last year the class did this with an amaryllis bulb, but since I couldn't find an amaryllis bulb we will try this concept with flower seeds. I hope the flowers grow.

This Friday your child's progress report will go home. Please take a couple of days to peruse it, sign it and then return it to me. If you would like to schedule a conference, please let me know and we can work out a time. The progress reports will be given to you to keep at the end of the year.

I would like to give you a heads up about the Valentine's party. It will take place in a couple of weeks and I will ask the first 5 families to contribute to this party. Next week I will place a sign up sheet for the party outside of our door. The second 5 families will be responsible for the Easter party. We will only have our original 10 children (no allergies) for the party since Ms. Sarah will be starting with her children in her classroom on Monday, Feb. 1st. We will miss them all. I think we have all enjoyed meeting a new teacher and some new friends. Next week for show and tell your child may choose to bring in whatever they would like to share. Thanks for reading and have a great week!

News from Miss Becca's Jack Rabbits

This week we are imagining we are in the tropics, the area in the middle of the earth near the invisible line that we can think about but not see. We enjoyed a make believe plane ride, our morning Brain Gym exercises include a river trip on which we pretend to see (and be) different animals of the rainforest. We are having fun in the sun at our "beach" center in the room. We also have a rainforest center, where we are learning all about this amazing habitat and its astounding biodiversity.

In fact, there is so much to learn that we are elongating this unit and cutting our next (Hearts and Valentines) a bit shorter. That means we won't leave the Let's Imagine until next Friday! We will then spend the following week, the week of Feb. 7th, learning about Love and preparing for our Valentines party on the morning of Feb. 12th. Parents that helped in the Halloween party will also be asked to supply food for this party – the sign-up sheet is on the Jack Rabbit's door. Also, for this party, all students will be asked to bring in Valentines for every friend in the class. We have been working a lot on how we accept everyone as our friends (Everybody's Everybody's Friend) and what it means to be a good friend (use a kind voice, use words instead of hands, share the talk, request, not command another person to do something, be inclusive and not exclusive when playing etc.) Making the Valentines with your child would be an opportune time to discuss these concepts and reinforce them with your child. Ask them details about who they have good relationships with and with whom it might be harder for them to be a good friend. Help them problem solve and think of what they could do *to help the person they are having a harder time being friends with*. Consider it homework – that is how I am explaining the Valentines to the kids in a few weeks – something I'd like them to work on at home.

This week we are also covering the letter M, with monkey, muffins, moose and marshmallows and money. In fact, the concept of money linked to the incorporation of our value – patience with our Patience Project.

Project Patience: Making Money to send to people in Haiti by ***Practicing Patience*** during the school day. We are earning money by using patience, like when we wait in line quietly, keeping our hands to ourselves when its time to wash hands. We then can take the money we earn and donate it by putting it in our large "Project Patience" money jar. It is not easy to save up money it takes a lot of time, effort, and...p...p...patience! This project will continue on all through January and most likely February as well. We are going till our Money Jar is full. I could use help collecting spare change, I have a change jar on my desk you could dump pocket change into at the end of the day if that's easy for you. Anything would help. I need

all types of coins. This week we are learning about pennies and nickels, eventually we will move on to dimes and quarters.

Next week, we will move on the letter N and the number 1 (again.) Please, help your child select a **show and tell item that begins with the letter N**. Thanks and as always, please, feel free to email me with questions or concerns!

News from Mrs. Knox's Rainbow Rabbits

Can you believe that this week is the end of January? The school year seems to be flying by. Report cards go home this Friday. Parents, your children did well on their evaluations. The progress report simply gives us a clue as to where the children are developmentally. Remember, there are so many areas of development: motor - physical development, social - emotional development, language development, and cognitive development. At three years of age children are striving to bring it all together which we call the development of the whole child. Also included would be Early Literacy through math, science, social studies, and arts content. We strive to meet the children where they are and to guide them where they are capable of going. Very important to the preschooler is negotiating the change from external to self-regulation - that is learning to regulate one's emotions, behaviors, and attention.

Many educators believe that Self-Regulation is the key to school success. It is felt that Self Regulation predicts school success over and above cognitive skills and family background. Therefore, that is a large area of focus for our Rainbow Rabbits.

Our Penguin Report information is attached to today's Daily Report. This should be fun for the whole family. Good luck and have fun. Also attached is the poster board for the project. Our due date for the project will be February 3, 2010. Thank you!

This week we are Imagining. The children will be imagining that they are in a bubble floating all around. When the bubble pops they will decide where they would like to land. This should be interesting! Will send home the results.

We are still concentrating on our Penguin books, as I must return them to the library soon. Letter M is this week's letter. We will continue to work on rote and rational counting throughout the school year. The boys and girl seem to know all their colors but we will still talk about them on a regular basis. Reading to your child at home and having him/her tell the story back to you is a wonderful language activity. We do this at school and I am always pleasantly surprised by how much they retain.

If you feel a need for a conference after progress reports go home, I will be happy to arrange a conference time.

Happy week to all!

News from Mrs. Momm's Bluebirds, Mrs. Chantal's Redbirds, Miss Kelsey's Hummingbirds, and Miss Rachel's Toucans

From the Reading Readiness Department ~ Mrs. Momm, Teacher

I can hardly believe that on Monday we will change the calendar to February 1st. February is an exciting month for our children. To start with the class is divided for February 2nd – Groundhog Day. Some want snow and hope he will see his shadow, while others are hoping for spring. February is also special because of two presidents' birthdays, Dental health month and National Heart Month. The most exciting day will be Friday the 12th, our Valentine Party Day!

We will review the vowels and work on our blends. Also our memory words. We will complete letter "M,m" and our new letter next week will be "H,h". Keep Warm!

From the Social Studies and Science Department ~ Mrs. Chantal, Teacher

This week we will discuss how animals get ready for the cold weather and how they adapt to the winter environment. The children will learn that animals have different characteristics that help them survive in the snow. The children will discover that some animals hibernate and some animals migrate to escape the cold winter. Our Weekly Readers themes are "I am a Baby Penguin" and "A Long Sleep"!

Our Valentine's Day party will be held on Friday, February 12th. For the party, I would ask Natalia, Jimmy, Jihoon, Ellie and Dakota to provide the food. There is a sign up sheet outside the Redbird's room. Thanks!

From the Art Department ~ Miss Rachel, Teacher

This week in art we will focus on this month's "Let's Imagine" theme. Last class we practiced swirling and drawing decorative designs to fill a space. The children then used glue and the same technique to create the design on paper, and this week they will use watercolors to add some color. We will also create some abstract art using shapes and paper scraps, and start on a Valentine's Day project. I can't wait to see what my young artists will come up with!

From the Technology and Math Department ~ Miss Kelsey, Teacher

Happy Wednesday, everyone! Can you believe that the first month of 2010 is already over?! It sure has flown by. This month the Hummingbirds have really been focusing on our values: CARING and PATIENCE. We have had many class discussions and read quite a few books with these two values as the topic of focus. In Math, we have completed the number 11 and moved on to number 12. Our ABC pattern bracelets were a big hit with all of the bird classes last week and successfully enforced the concept of patterning. Over the next couple of weeks I will be introducing a new pattern: AAB. We will also be reviewing our shapes of circle, square, rectangle, and triangle.

Our focus in Technology for the next couple of weeks will be to explore Word and all of the different functions. We will begin by learning about fonts. The children will type their names in Word and experiment with changing the size, color, and style. Of course, fun computer games will be played as well. I hope you all have a fabulous week! ☺

News from Mrs. Leahey's Kindergarten

Report cards go out this Friday and I want to say how pleased I am with all the children again this quarter! The conference sign-up sheet is on the notice board outside the classroom so check it and let me know if you cannot make any of those times listed. Please remember that each conference cannot be more than 15 minutes long in order to keep to the conference schedule. Thank you!

As an FYI, the children are beginning to encounter more words that contain two vowels and what are known as 'special sounds'. Our new sight words will reflect this, and this week's words are take/came/that. The first 'special sound' that we will look at is the sound th and how it can be said in two ways, as in 'that' and also in 'thater'. These sounds cannot be sounded out and that's why they are special☺! This week we are looking at addition and particularly number bonds to 10 – these are the addition combinations that add to 10, such as 8+2/2+8, 4+6/6+4. The children will be making a number strip for their homework that will help them learn these number bonds but I will send a note to you on Friday explaining how it works! In phonics we have been thinking about describing words and how they make a sentence a lot more interesting. In Science we will be learning about polar bears, and I would like to say a big THANK YOU to **Mrs. Kang, mom of Bumkyu** in the Bumblebees. She let us borrow her DVD of the 'Planet Earth' series so that we could watch how penguins live in the Antarctic. Enjoy the end of January☺!

Specialties Speak



Spanish with Senora Muni

Feliz Año Nuevo!!! I hope everyone is having a great year 2010 so far, and I wish health and happiness to all of you and your loved ones :0)

The Bumble Bees are now mastering their colores, especially the colors of the rainbow: rojo-red, naranja-orange, amarillo-yellow, verde-green, azul-blue, morado-purple, and love singing the "Arcoiris" (rainbow) song. The Bunnies have finished their animales unit, and this week we are starting the shapes unit: circulo-circle, cuadrado-square, triangulo-triangle, rectangulo-rectangle, ovalo-oval, diamante-diamond, estrella-star, and we will be working on memorization through fun activities. The Birds are still working on their shapes unit by coloring several work sheets, and will continue on these through part of February. Kindergarten had so much fun playing Bingo: Colores y Formas, and getting some treats along with it!! Kinders have now started their parts of the body, and we will be focusing on basic parts, starting with this week and part of next one: cabeza-head, ojos-eyes, nariz-nose, and boca-mouth.



P.E. & Health with Mrs. Fox

I cannot believe how fast January has gone by. We have been busy working on our basketball skills, large group games, and a variety of eye-hand activities. We are still going to continue with basketball skills. In addition we will be doing folk and social dancing, square dancing, and more jump rope activities. The kinders have been working on basketball shooting skills, we will be playing simple basketball games by mid February. We will also work on folk and social dancing. We will be doing more eye-hand activities as well. We will still be going out as the weather allows us too. Please continue to have your children wear gloves, and warm coats.

Miss Manners is working very hard with the 4's and kinders. We have been working towards our tea party in the kinder room. The children have been working hard on their manners place mats for the tea party. We will be continuing our unit into February. We will all be working on nutrition as well. Topics will include meal planning, the food pyramid, and making healthy snacks.

Have a great heart healthy month do some extra cardio activities for your heart this month! Get Fit!

Computer with Mrs. Poppe



January has found the students exploring Trudy's Time & Place House. They have been able to tell time using both an analog and digital clock, visited the continents and oceans of the world and exploring using directions like North, South, East and West or up, down, right and left. We have looked at map symbols creating our won maps of the sandbox and visited the people on a street and what each one does. The month will complete with exploring various cultures and what they eat, how they play, what they wear and where they live. January has just flown by, I expect February will do likewise, have a great Valentine's Day!

Preschool Music with Miss Liz



Welcome to the 'winter wonderland'... ok so our real snow all came in December but we were too busy singing Christmas songs then to sing our snow songs. So, this month we've put on our imagination caps and had a wonderfully white winter! We have sung about getting dressed to go outside, building a snowman, and fun activities that we can do in the snow. Working on singing, story telling (i.e. the correct order of building a snowman), staying on topic (i.e. we wouldn't go swimming outside), and working on descriptive words to use (i.e. a puffy coat, soft scarf, or dry boots). Of course there were a few other notable events in the month of January. This month we remember Dr. Martin Luther King and his dream of a peaceful world of acceptance. To honor him and his wonderful dream we sang and signed (with American Sign Language) two songs: 'Sing a Song of Peace' and 'Dr. King had a Dream'. I truly love these two simple songs because the messages of peace, love, and tolerance are so important to teach our children. Next month we will be singing about hearts with a time tested favorite "Heart-Beat", yep the rhythm instruments will be making yet another appearance! Lots to look forward to. Be sure to check out the bulletin board in the big room to see the words to many of the songs we've been singing this month! Here's our favorite getting dressed to go outside song:

Dressing for Winter

(sung to He's Got the Whole World in His Hands)

I've got _____ on my _____;

I've got _____ on my _____;

I've got _____ on my _____.

They keep me cozy on a winter day!

(fill in the blanks with words like two warm mittens; Hands, nice dry boots; Feet, Puffy snow coat; arms)

Academy Music with Miss Jennifer

We are having a great time in music. We sang songs about Martin Luther King Jr. to prepare for that holiday. We are currently working on songs with different parts in them. The kids LOVE when they get to sing 'solos'. This next month, we get to sing lots about LOVE! Have a great month!

