

WINTER NEWSLETTER

February 11, 2009

MONTESSORI
CENTER OF NYACK



Hurt No Living Thing Winter News

By Harriet Teplitzky

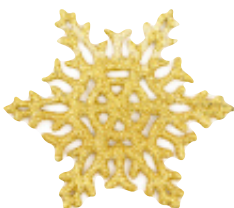
OH! Wonderful Winter! As adults, we don't always like the inconvenience of winter weather! However, for young children, (and some grownups) this is a season of great "wonders." Therefore, as part of Hurt No Living Thing, we have been exploring winter in all of our classes. For example, in the UPP, the class has been investigating animal behavior in the winter, including hibernation, migration and adaptation. The children have been working with a table activity that places small animals in their hibernation habitats. Similarly, the class has worked on an interactive project called "Who's Hibernating?" In this activity, the children can find hibernating animals under the

flaps covering a winter scene. UPP has also been delving into a study of backyard birds in winter, learning to identify the appearance and sound of our non-migratory bird friends.

Like the UPP, the DPP is also enjoying the wonders of winter. The class has been experimenting with ice and snow, how water freezes and how snow melts. In addition, the children have been learning about backyard birds in winter. They have experimented with feathers, and plan a pinecone feeder. DPP offers art work for the children to color that consists of winter-related pictures. They have been singing Tom Chapin's lovely song, This Pretty Planet, which celebrates the beauty of planet Earth!

The National Wildlife Association reminds us that "as winter marches on, it gets easier and easier to stay inside, but don't be afraid of the cold. Embrace it, and let it put a little spring in your step! Even 15 minutes of fresh air is better for the health and well-being of your kids than none, so bundle up and get out there."

Idea: Put black paper in the freezer. When it snows, catch snowflakes on the paper. Quickly use a magnifying glass, and you can see individual snowflakes! Supposedly, if you spray the snowflakes with hairspray, they will be preserved!



UPP AM/PM News

Since returning to school on January 5th, the children have learned five new letters of the alphabet—b, h, j, o, m. It is amazing how quickly they catch on. It is clear that visual re-enforcement of the letter sounds really helps! Thank you for bringing in all the letter-of-the-week objects and drawings.

As we gazed around the classroom, we realized that all the lessons on the shelves have been utilized! The Montessori Maps are very popular with the children. In the Practical Life Area, “Pouring One to Two” (pouring one pitcher of water into two cups) and “Bubble Making” are frequently chosen. Similarly, in the Sensorial Area, the Trinomial Cube—a three dimensional representation of an algebraic formula—and the Constructive Boxes—which help prepare little minds for future mathematics—are often seen out on the mats during our work cycles. In addition, in Language, the children are learning to discern beginning and

ending sounds. Some students are building words with the Moveable Alphabet. Others are beginning their literacy development with Sandpaper Letters, Metal Insets, and reading phonetically controlled readers. Finally, in addition to their Montessori work, the children are learning many new songs and a Hungarian dance.

“Gung Hay Fat Choy!” We celebrated the Asian New Year in class with homemade lanterns and a parade under the dragon costume! Thank you to Ms. Shen Chin (Chloe and Christopher’s mom) and Kelley Haderl (Margot’s mom) for the New Year feast! Thank you, too, to all the parents who shared their talents and interests with the UPP classes: Katherine O’Connor, (Sean Ma’s mom) Barbara Malagraph, Scott Behson, (Nicholas’s dad) Anu Ameran, (Michael Kim’s mom) Nicole Palitti, (Julia’s mom) John Gromada, (Sylvie’s dad) Gail Yamamoto, (Logan’s mom) Neil Berg and Rita Harvey, (Lucas’s mom and dad) and Janet Paseltiner (Hannah’s mom).

DPP Classroom News

Is it February already? Since we returned from the winter break, we have been very busy. For example, last month we spent a good deal of time talking about Martin Luther King and the concept of treating everyone equally. We read books about Dr. King. Similarly, we discussed the inauguration of President Obama. The children were surprisingly knowledgeable about the inauguration!

From Washington, D.C., we turned our attention the Ukraine—homeland of our own Mariana. Mariana has prepared and presented an extensive unit about the Ukraine. Just look at the array of photographs displayed outside the classroom. They show the class trying on Ukrainian clothing, sampling pirogues, and listening to the bandura—a Ukrainian musical instrument. The children can count from 1-10 in Ukrainian and can

locate the Ukraine on a map. We are all enjoying learning about a land and culture far away.

In Practical Life, we’ve begun hand washing, and in Language, we have introduced the letters c, i, t, and g. In the Mathematic area, we’ve added the tens board. Some of the older children have even begun addition! Finally, the class loved our unit on Backyard Birds in Winter! We experimented with feathers to see how they keep winter birds warm. The children learned the parts of the bird. It is wonderful to see how knowledgeable the children have become about our five non-migratory bird friends: the Sparrow, the Blue Jay, the Cardinal, the Woodpecker, and the Crow! The children are thrilled when we spot our winter bird friends in the neighborhood around school!



We marked the Asian New Year in several ways. The children

Greetings from Miss Dharni! She is doing well in the final stages of her double master’s degree. Both the children and the teachers will be happy when she returns!

DATES TO REMEMBER

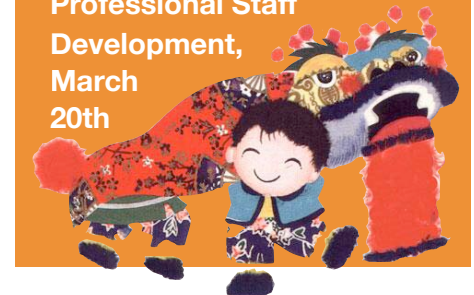
School Closed, Feb. 16th - 20th

Daffodil Deadline, Feb 25th

Parent - Teacher Conferences, March 5th & 6th

Open Music, March 12th & 13th

School Closed for Professional Staff Development, March 20th



made their own red decorative lanterns. We learned that “red” is the color of good luck! In addition, in music class, the class danced the traditional Chinese dragon dance under a dragon costume. The sounds of the children singing the “Dragon Song” and playing Chinese music on the xylophones drifted through the entire school!

Congratulations to Mariana! She won the “Rookie of the Year” Award from Childcare Resources of Rockland County! This award is given annually to an individual who has entered the field within the last three years, has shown outstanding ability and demonstrated a commitment to a career working with children. Mariana will receive her award at the Children’s Champions dinner in April. If you would like more information about the Children’s Champions award and dinner go to www.childcarerockland.org.