

March/April 2010 Newsletter

Class News:

Scribbles 'n Bits

We continue to welcome new and old friends to our class. The children enter the room eager to explore. They have become familiar with our circle time and the closing of our day with play dough, the goodbye song and the anticipated "sticker time."

It has been fun for all of us to play and talk together over the weeks and months. Some of our Scribblers will be joining the Intro class in the fall, and some others we will welcome back to Scribbles 'n Bits.

Please see Mimi in the office if you are interested in joining Scribbles 'n Bits. Our next session begins late September, and families are notified in August.

--Lauren Brickner-McDonald

Intro

Intro has burst into spring with great exuberance! In addition to our usual fun "work," we've enjoyed some different toys, lately.

There is always big excitement when we bring the tunnel into the classroom! In addition to the great large motor and coordination "workout," it is a great vehicle for creative play and skills. We are different animals or vehicles traveling through it—sparking lots of "great ideas," leaders, performers, etc. We practice social skills by taking turns, giving each other time and room, changing directions, and taking care of the tunnel.

The "gear" game, which we borrow from the 4s, is another popular "borrowed" game. It builds strong finger muscles and develops fine motor coordination. It is tricky arranging the gears "just right"—so that turning one gear turns its neighbors. We can actually see



how it does that, just like in some real engines!

Finally, we can't enjoy spring without nature's "show and tell." Daffodils, azaleas, and forsythia are flower names we have learned. They help us review our colors as we take turns passing a flower around our circle. Of course we exercise all of our senses. We especially like touching and smelling them as they are examined. It has been fun watching spring unfold outside, handling some of nature inside, and reproducing it with our art projects, songs, and play as well.

Intro has grown through fall and winter, and is truly "blossoming" this spring, in oh-so-many ways! We can see it; can you?

--Kathy Adams,
Nancy Malchow & Linda Murphy

3A, 3BI, 3BII, & 3C

Spring has finally arrived! With the bitter cold days of this winter behind us, it is wonderful to spend time outdoors. The threes have enjoyed their outside play time together. We have been busy digging, running, climbing, and pedaling our big tricycles. Some of us can go really fast!

We have begun to observe the many signs of spring; looking for growing grass, buds and flowers, and listening for chirping birds and other critters. We have looked for the wind. We played with our wind wands as their ribbons were blowing. We watched clouds, leaves and branches moving with the wind. We repeated this in our classrooms with parachute play and flying kites with tails.

During the month of March we had fun celebrating St. Patrick's Day. We decorated shamrocks and painted beautiful rainbows. Some of us made Irish soda bread, taking turns measuring, mixing, and kneading.

We celebrated the April holidays of Passover and Easter. We tasted matzah pancakes for snack and listened to stories about Passover. For Easter we molded and decorated spring baskets and dyed eggs to put inside them. We were so proud to bring our beautiful baskets home, Thank you so much to Thomas' mom Ellen Hardy, for organizing and providing eggs



filled with goodies for our spring egg hunt. The children loved searching the classroom for the hidden eggs!

Spring continued to arrive in our classrooms. Our songs, finger-plays, and books have focused on the spring theme with many quacking ducks and croaking frogs! Soon our rooms will have the same signs of spring we witness outside. Look for seeds sprouting, trees budding, flowers blooming, and birds flying!

By the way, have you noticed that we're growing...we are so much better at so many things than we were at the beginning of the school year; like cutting, gluing, painting, imagining, pouring our juice, being considerate of others, using words, sharing, taking turns, talking with one another, listening, and enjoying our friends...and that's just the beginning. We continue to grow!

A special thanks to Cosmo's father, Darrell Fusco, for coming in and talking about their trip to Arizona and teaching us about cacti. Thank you to Hanna Bhatti's mom Sumera, in class 3C, for the lovely cakes.

--Kathy Adams, Carolyn Clark, Debbie Kasel, Denise Laden, Nancy Malchow, Louise Marsh & Linda Murphy

4A and 4C

From birth, our children are continually expanding their awareness of a world of which they are the center. We capitalize on this innate self interest to explore the concept of growth. We begin by

noticing what elements are necessary to keep our bodies healthy and growing (food, rest, exercise, etc). After tracing and cutting small bodies, we painted red and blue arteries and veins.

But what if a body was not working so well? We pretended with special equipment (crutches, a wheelchair, walkers, etc) that would allow us to continue enjoying school if we were physically handicapped. We painted sighted and unsighted (blindfolded) as well as with no hands (straw in mouth). It's hard, but can be done.

Our visit to the dentist included learning about what we can do in order to have strong teeth. We also found out that we can be comfortable in a dentist's office!

Early in March, our dramatic play area became a dentist's office, then later morphed into a hospital. Nurse Nancy (our own Mrs. Malchow) helped calm any anxiety connected to a doctor's office visit. Did you see our letter "B"s all covered in bandaids? One of our stories was Franklin Goes to the Hospital. It was a good introduction to



our trip to St. Clare's Hospital, where we explored the pediatric wing and ER. If we ever need to be there for something other than a visit, we will recognize it as a place to get help from very friendly people.

Our celebration of new life in spring has propelled us to research growth in all things. This is how we continue to grow inside and out.

--Arlene Aspell, Kathy DeMare & Ruth Trachtenberg

Creative Drama

Every few weeks we select a childhood classic to play with. Jack and the Bean Stalk is an appropriate reflection of our current curriculum on "green" and growing things.

As you probably have heard, with the help of some magic, those seeds grew overnight to a vastly oversized version of a plant even bigger than those we created to celebrate Earth Day and the rainforest.

We have completed our examination of the egg as a symbol of new life for Easter, Passover, and spring. This theme is repeated as Jack escapes with the golden egg-laying hen which allows for a new life for Jack and his mother.

"Fee Fi Fo Fum" was a constant refrain as we practiced our choral speaking. Our story sequencing skills were enhanced as we remembered the order of events in retelling the story in our own words. So "Fee Fi Fo Fum" our story is done.

--Kathy DeMare & Ruth Trachtenberg

4D

Our busy month of March began with a celebration of Dr. Seuss' birthday. We learned interesting facts about Theodor Seuss Geisel's life, cut and decorated Cat in the Hat hats, completed Dr. Seuss puzzles, and filled our library with Dr. Seuss books.

Then we concentrated on good dental health, learning about our teeth and how to take care of them. We counted out 20 cotton ball teeth to glue on our giant smiles, brushed big teeth with shaving cream, and brought in a dental health "show and tell." We especially enjoyed our field trip to Cabana Family Dental office where we saw the special instruments dentists use, saw our teeth on a computer screen, and got to sit in the patient chair. Soon after that we began studying how our bodies work and how best to stay healthy by eating right, exercising, drinking plenty of water, and resting. We learned about the food groups by giving each child a chance to sort a real food item into a food group chart, and then later making individual food books. After learning about the inside of our bodies, we traced and cut out bodies and added the heart, brain, stomach, lungs, and veins & arteries. Our dress

up corner was transformed into a hospital and the children had the opportunity to use a variety of medical instruments. Special thanks to Heather Weiner (Lindsey's mom), a nurse practitioner, who came in and showed the class the different medical instruments she uses. Our unit also gave the children an opportunity to use a wheelchair, walker, and crutches, which helped them to be aware of people who are differently-abled. We painted with a brush and our feet, painted using a straw in our mouths, and also tried to paint blindfolded. We learned that it is very difficult for us to not have the use of our eyes and hands. Our unit culminated with a trip to St. Clare's Hospital in Denville. In the Pediatric Emergency Room we saw the real equipment used to check breathing and heart rates. We also toured the children's floor and saw how child-friendly it is. We hope to never have to go to the hospital, but if we do, we know what to expect and we won't be scared. Special thanks to Nancy Malchow, RN, who shared her nursing experience with the children who did not attend the trip. She gave the children an opportunity using "hands-on" experience with medical equipment such as leg braces, splints, a temporal thermometer, wrist splints, ace bandages, and a stethoscope.



St. Patrick's Day presented us with a variety of activities. While focusing on the letter R, the children worked together to create a giant rainbow, and the beginning sounds of the color words by tracing and cutting out the letters that each color word begins



with, Of course we also added a pot of gold at the end of the rainbow full of glittery gold coins that we made. While

focusing on the beginning sound "SH," we traced and cut out shamrocks, and a "SH" chart with pictures we brought in for "show and tell." After reading the book The Three Wishes, each child dictated his or her own stories which began, "If a leprechaun gave me one wish, I would wish for..." We also

baked delicious Irish soda bread which we enjoyed on St. Patrick's Day.

March comes in like a lion...and goes out like a lamb. March and April provided us with a wealth of activities related to spring. Windy March gave us the opportunity to do an air experiment with our breath, a fan, and a blow dryer as we tried to move different objects around the room. Painted kites now fly on our spring bulletin board and golf ball roll green grass lines our ground. Other activities included making beautiful spring birds, spring baskets and dyed eggs, a forsythia craft, and painting gladiola bulbs. We also learned about Passover traditions as well. After reading the story, The Matzah Man—A Passover Story the children cut out and decorated a matzah man or woman. Then they drew a scene for their matzah person and dictated a short story about where their person was running. Thank you to everyone who brought in holiday foods/napkins for us to enjoy in class.



Expanding on Earth Day we learned about the layers of the rainforest: emergent, canopy, understory, and floor. We cut our GIANT leaves, created GIANT flowers, made vines, painted colorful birds, and made monkeys and snakes to make a rainforest habitat in our room. We read the book The Great Kapok Tree and learned about the importance of protecting the rainforest. Thank you to all who participated in the Earth Bank collection for the rainforest.

--Arlene Aspell, Joan Mallotides, Carolyn Clark & Therese Jonsson

Five Senses – 4D

We began our Five Senses unit by focusing on the sense of hearing. We studied vibrations using stretch cords, tuning forks, spoons attached to strings, and other objects from the Morris Museum box called "Sound: What do You Hear?". Then the children made rubber band guitars! By

talking through tin can and string telephones, we could hear the transmission of sound because of the vibrating string. We took the opportunity to teach the proper and polite way to talk on the phone, as well as practice our telephone numbers. For "show and tell," the children brought in a variety of "musical" items to share with the class.

Exploring the sense of smell was fun during our sense of smell "show and tell" where we got to smell a variety of fragrances. Each child made a "Smell Book" by choosing different scents to put on the pages of his or her book.

After reading the story Stone Soup, a folk tale about cooperation, we cut up the vegetables we brought in to school and added them to our broth (with a stone in it!). We smelled it cooking and tasted it for snack. Soup from a stone...imagine that! Yummy.

During our taste unit we learned about our tongues and our taste buds which tell us what is sweet, salty, sour, and bitter. We brought our taste unit to a close by having a blind taste-test game show. Four blindfolded children at a time tried to guess what type of food was in the plate before them using their sense of smell, touch, and taste. We encouraged them to describe the foods with adjectives such as salty, crunchy, soft, sweet, juicy, etc.

We love exploring and learning with all our senses.

--Arlene Aspell, Joan Mallotides & Therese Jonsson

Kindergarten Enrichment

Every Thursday afternoon our inquisitive group of 5-year-olds looks forward to locating on our scientific globe the area or country we will visit that day. We explored the giant pyramids of Egypt and learned about mummies with the help of a museum box, as well as photos that Ms. Jonsson took when she was really there. We also saw our names written in hieroglyphics!

Next, we learned about the animals of the African savannah, and designed habitats for our favorites: giraffe, zebra, tiger, and leopard.

We love taking advantage of the travel experiences of our teacher friends. We welcomed Mrs. Malchow to our class, since she'd just returned from Hawaii. She enjoyed dressing up as a Hawaiian girl and teaching us the hula to authentic music. We also caught tropical fish on our fishing poles, and some of us made leis.

With spring in the air and flowers popping up everywhere, it seemed natural to visit The Netherlands, whose Holland tulips are famous world-wide. We tried on wooden shoes, looked at paintings by Van Gogh, and made lots of tulips. We also enjoyed the classic tale of The Hole in the Dike.

Because the annual Earth Day celebration is here again, we visited the rainforests of Costa Rica and the Amazon River. We painted an awesome tiger to add to the 4D rainforest environmental display. Come in and see what we are very excited to share with you!

--Arlene Aspell & Therese Jonsson

Class News: Kidsclub

In March, we opened the Mango Tango Café, which got rave reviews. This restaurant unit began with designing our own menus, featuring entrees, and deciding on a name for our restaurant. Our first specialty was preparing the Mexican tacos. We made colorful chef hats, too, as we playacted running a restaurant, and practiced good manners. Next we welcomed spring by studying real bird nests. We then made tasty bird nests for dessert using chocolate "mud," chow mein noodle "grass," and jelly bean "eggs."

April is the month we designate to celebrate Earth Day. While we know we need to take care of our precious planet all year long, now is the time Kidsclub children focus on the ways we can "reduce, reuse, recycle" to keep our world looking beautiful. In our "Class with Trash"



we built a recycling monster which we fed with all recycled materials. We learned to recognize the arrow recycling symbol, and sorted recyclables into the proper containers. Reuse is an important concept. Before you throw something in the trash, consider how it could be reused.

The children are learning that there is fun to be had with ordinary throw away items during our "game day" class. There is a difference between garbage and recyclables. This generation of children is learning about the fragility of our world and their part in trying to preserve the planet. Thank you for your contributions to the Earth Day project. We turned your wine corks into a beautiful trivet.

--Arlene Aspell & Denise Laden

Miscellaneous News

Staff Training

Teacher Kathy DeMare represented the school at the Annual Spring Conference sponsored by the Northwest Chapter of NJAEYC on the evening of March 10. Held at the College of St. Elizabeth, the workshops included one on nurturing preschool writing by creating purposeful writing experiences in the classroom and another on how to incorporate books that have a mathematical dimension, so that they can be springboards for mathematical thinking. We'll be listening to Kathy share highlights of the programs at our May staff meeting.

On Wed., March 31, the entire staff attended a training session sponsored by New Bridge Services, Inc. The focus was dealing with traumatic loss, stress, and grief in young children. Mary Viners, the Coordinator of Prevention Services at the organization facilitated. She explained the range of resources available to assist in these situations. We learned about ways to promote healing and resiliency in the aftermath of trauma in the very young. Included in the workshop was an introduction to the developmental ages and stages for children in grief, relaxation techniques

to help calm children, ways we can help parents help their children to cope with trauma, etc. The print resources distributed were very helpful and comprehensive. Of particular interest was a list of picture books that address these serious topics. As you can see, even though we cancelled the staff inservice training for March and made up a snow day instead, we managed to receive training hours.

In June, the entire staff will receive on site training in first aid, which is required every three years for our recertification.

College of St. Elizabeth

Graduate students at the College of St. Elizabeth continue to contact us to arrange for class observations. For their certification program, they are required to observe five hours in our classrooms on a given day, and then write about the classroom activities they observed as they relate theory to practice. We are flattered that the college recommends us to be a host school in helping to prepare highly qualified teachers for our schools.

Screamfree Parenting

Our annual Parent Education Day, on March 11, featured Certified Parent Coach Peggy Fitzpatrick. Many families attended the program which was offered at no charge. Peggy just completed a dynamic four week "Screamfree Parenting" workshop on Wednesdays from 9-10:30am here at school. We're grateful to have had Peggy share these new techniques and strategies in parenting with us, as a "Certified Screamfree Parenting Leader." Thanks are also due to two moms on our hospitality committee who provided delicious banana bread and coffee cake for the March 11 meeting. Terri Laurens and Deb Joyal satisfied our taste buds. Thank you so very much!



Week of the Young Child Celebration

We hope you were able to attend the free event that was held on Sat. April

17 at the Community Children's Museum in Dover. All this was arranged through the NJ Association for the Education of Young Children. Every year a week in April is designated to focus attention on the needs of young children and their families. The many benefits of high quality early childhood programs have been substantiated by research.

At Scribbles this year, we chose to celebrate the Week of the Young Child with a display about literacy. Please look for it in the hall and read about the value of literacy today and how we promote it. (Don't worry! If your child's work is on display, it will come home by the end of the month.)

Fresh Pasta from Raffetto's

We hope you got to a chance to read about the Raffetto family on our display outside the kitchen. Although the Raffetto children attended Scribbles several years ago, mom Agnes and dad Richard, are still so generous to us with their spectacular, popular fresh pasta sale. Pick up is scheduled for Wednesday April 28 between 11:15 - 12:20pm by the school kitchen. If you have any questions, please contact Scribbles mom Colleen Smith at (973)-402-1608 (Thanks, Colleen).

Class Photos

Photos will be distributed the week of May 3rd. If you haven't ordered yet but decide you want to order now (or if you want to order additional copies) just let the office staff know. Once again, we're indebted to Liana Bassin for her outstanding talent in "capturing" the children in the photos.

Scribbles Yearbook 2009-2010

We are currently reviewing a hardcopy proof. Final revisions should be sent to the printer shortly, so that you receive your copy in early June. We know you will be pleased. Once again, kudos go to Liana Bassin for countless hours coordinating and arranging and designing the pages. A big thank you to Emily Rosenbaum for assisting with the text. Of course, the entire fundraising committee is due our gratitude. They've done so much since school started in helping to defray the cost of sending

teachers Arlene Aspell and Nancy Malchow to the NAEYC convention this past November. As soon as all our yearbook and pasta orders are distributed we'll have an accounting of each fundraising event. This includes the Kid's Art early in the fall (Thank you, Alessandra Zorlas) to the yearbook in early June.

Public Health Nurse

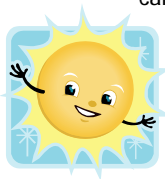
Barbara Zigarelli of the Montville Health Department again conducted the yearly audit of the medical records we have on file for each child. She also distributed information and notices on blood lead testing that is mandated by the state of NJ for children under 6. Montville and Mountain Lakes children were eligible for the lead screening test that was held at the Montville Health Department from 5-6:30pm on Monday April 26. More information about the importance of this screening is available in the school office and is posted in the hall.

Busy Bees

Our program for children in the 4s classes has been postponed to May. It will be held on Wednesdays from 12-1:30pm, on May 5, 12, and 19. If you need an extra registration form, please stop by the office.

Summer Adventure Camp

Its not too late to register! Camp will be held the weeks of June 14 and June 21. Your child can attend a minimum of two days either week. For the convenience of our families, we have added an option for the "Intro" campers so that they



can add an additional half hour each day, thereby attending from 9-12 like the 3s and 4s campers.

They can also come both weeks. Sibling discounts are also being given for summer camp. Extra registration forms are in the office. Scribbles teachers will be our "counselors" (with the addition of one of teacher Denise Laden's sons!)

Earth Day Celebration

We thank all of our 4s classes for participating in our annual "Big Gift to the Earth" campaign. Check out our hall display. SO far we raised \$107.75 to save the world's wettest rainforest, the Columbian Choco in the foothills of the Andes. In addition to learning about the rainforest in general, thanks to your involvement, we actually purchased an area of rainforest to insure its preservation. We'll receive our certificate shortly, which will let us know just how many acres were saved because of you!



Upcoming Events

We look forward to our "pet days" this week and to our "parent appreciation days" in May. Remember to check out our website and your email regarding reminders for these special activities. Don't miss the Kid's Dance Caravan recital on Tues. May 18. It is held right here and it's always a joy!

Scholastic Books

Our last orders for the school year will be submitted in May. As soon as Scholastic's online ordering system is running smoothly, we'll let you know so you can order online if you prefer. April orders should be arriving within a week.

Goodsearch and Goodshop

This was publicized recently as a way to help the school every time you shop and search online. Both the search engine and online marketplace have us up and running, so please use them! Thank you to our fundraising committee members, especially Anthony Oakes, for suggesting that we participate in this type of ongoing fundraiser.

Miscellaneous Thanks

Our latest "thank you" goes to Shelley Hawes, Abigail's mom, for the donation of wonderful hardcover picture books on just about every topic in the curriculum! Another thank you goes to Munchkin Music's

Claudia Baumgaertner Lemmerz, for her donation of dinosaurs and an area rug.

A big thank you to Deb Joyal, Andrew & Zachary's mom, for her excellent work on this newsletter!