



Newsletter December 2011



The Gift of Giving

It is always rewarding listening to very young children talk about the holiday season. During December, many of our stories at Meeting focused on giving and on helping others. Throughout the month, the children had many opportunities for giving. They made cards to accompany the gifts we sent to La Comunidad Hispana, made keepsakes for their families, sent get-well wishes to Andrea during her absence, and drew pictures of the sheep to thank Judy Wilson for allowing them to spend the fall with us.

The children also thought of many ways to help others, especially their families, as we all prepared for holiday celebrations: cleaning bedrooms and playrooms, decorating Christmas trees, hanging up lights outside, helping to bake cookies or other goodies,

taking care of pets, and playing nicely with siblings were some of the things the children mentioned. None of our Fairville students seemed to be preoccupied with gifts and what they would be getting—for these young children spending time with family and friends, working together, and enjoying the simple pleasures of the holidays seemed most important. How refreshing in a world that can place so much value on material possessions!

I hope you all enjoyed your holidays and are looking forward to all the joys that a new year will bring!

Happy New Year!

Warmly,
Sharon



Calendar

January 2nd	Welcome Back to School!
January 16th	Martin Luther King, Jr. Day—School Closed
January 22nd	Family Open House for prospective families 2-4 pm
January 23rd	Enrichment Session C begins
January 27th	Registration Forms for 2012-13 due today

In the Classrooms.....



Vicki and Liza's Ladybugs had fun studying winter, reading gingerbread stories and making their own edible gingerbread ornaments. Many of the ornaments never made it to the Christmas tree! The class also enjoyed hearing a book about Hanukkah, read by Gabe's grandmother. I noticed that the Ladybugs liked playing outdoors in the unseasonably warm December weather, too!

Elaiza and Meaghan's Ladybugs were busy with color activities in December. They read Mouse Paint, mixed paint on paper and also tried painting with golf balls. The Ladybugs had a Mystery Box in their classroom and had fun identifying different objects that were placed in the box.



The Bumblebees engaged in many activities to celebrate the traditions of the season. They focused on families, books of peace, and the gift of giving.

As the first day of winter approached, they busied themselves painting and crafting snowmen in anticipation of the first snowfall. Maybe soon.....



In December the Fireflies learned all about evergreens, practicing cutting out triangles to create trees and painting with pine cones. They read stories about many different holiday traditions including Hanukkah and Kwanzaa. The Fireflies also warned us to watch out for spinning dreidels and runaway gingerbread men!



The Inchworms each brought in a favorite book to share this month. Children were thoughtful about the books they chose and were excited to have their books read aloud to the class. They did an excellent job of taking turns and asking thoughtful questions!

Thanks! Thanks! Thanks!

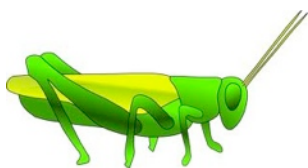
Thanks to all who participated in the Holiday Giving Tree program. We collected a multitude of gifts for the families, identified by La Comunidad Hispana, that needed our help in order to provide a happy holiday for their children. I know the families are grateful for your generous donations.

The teachers enjoyed a very delicious lunch thanks to the parent volunteers who stepped forward to provide food items and childcare so the staff could all participate in a festive meal.

We received many gifts for the classrooms: several new books, gift cards, paints, a drying rack for the Grasshopper classroom and a new easel for the Inchworm room. Thank you so much for supporting our school program!

We also appreciate those who helped organize and those who attended one of the PJ storytimes with John Hendrix from Bayard Taylor Library and/or the Holiday Sing-along with Bill Currier. It's so nice to see our campus being utilized by our families! (Special thanks for cleaning up all of the glitter!)

In the Classrooms (continued)...



The Grasshoppers started the month with a unit on measurement, measuring the length of items inside and outside of their classroom. The TTh class became interested in more than measurement and soon began a study of building and constructing, doing the work of structural engineers as they tried to figure out how to keep Unifix cubes elevated and connected once they reached the edge of the table. The MWF class spent time figuring out how many Unifix cubes it would take to reach from the classroom all the way to the Meeting room. This required a lot of new vocabulary, collaboration, experimentation and counting on the part of the children in both groups!



The Butterflies busied themselves studying the holidays celebrated by the children in their classroom. They made Christmas tree collages and used their observational skills to draw detailed poinsettia pictures. Torn paper poinsettia cards were made to send along with the gifts under the Giving Tree. The class read a Hanukkah book and made menorahs out of play-doh and straws. They also played dreidel to practice math skills. Paper roses, just like the ones Juan made, were constructed after reading Our Lady of Guadalupe. The class also baked Santa Lucia buns with Judy and dressed up to deliver Santa Lucia bread to the staff. It was very tasty!

Betsy recently reminded parents in her blog that preschool children learn best through play, highlighting what skills the children were learning or which ones were being reinforced when the children participated in the activities available in the Butterfly classroom. Learning through play is key to Fairville's philosophy, and the value of play for healthy brain development is well-supported by current research. Recent articles have stated that play is also important for adult brains, so remember to take time out of your day for play!



This month we said goodbye to Angel, Itty Bitty and Betsy Blue, our three sheep. They have returned to the barn for the winter. We're going to miss our fuzzy friends but we look forward to seeing them, or their relatives, in the spring as soon as the grass in the pasture begins to grow!

What about Oscar?

Oscar is an outdoor bunny and has developed a thick winter coat to protect him from the elements. He has a heated water bottle and plenty of straw to keep him warm on all but the coldest of winter days. Oscar comes home with me on the weekends but will be at school during the week. Please continue to visit him—he enjoys having company!

Annual Giving Campaign

We are fortunate at Fairville that so many of you willingly volunteer your time to help us in so many ways. We would not be able to run such a successful school without your generous gifts of time and talent. Thank you! As Julie Gardner noted in her recent Annual Giving letter, tuition covers only about 80% of the expense of running our school; the other 20% we need to raise through our Annual Giving and fundraising efforts. We thank all of you who have already contributed to Annual Giving and encourage those of you who haven't donated yet to make a contribution. Every gift is important; our goal this year is for 100% of our families to participate in Annual Giving!

Special gift: Thanks to the generosity of a former Fairville parent, we have a gift for all of our Annual Giving donors. If you have made an Annual Giving contribution, please stop in the office to pick up your copy of the Fairville Songbook CD. The Songbook includes many of the songs we sing at Meeting, performed by Gabby, Bill and the children of Fairville (2010-11). If you have not donated yet, we welcome you to stop up with your donation and to receive your gift!



Family Open House on Sunday, January 22 2-4 pm

Please help us spread the word! Invite your friends and neighbors to bring their children to Fairville to explore our classrooms and campus. In addition to campus tours and information, activities will be set up in the classrooms to allow prospective families and their children to experience some of the ways that we engage children in play-based learning.

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Winter Weather

Now that winter is approaching, please take a moment to review our inclement weather policy.

During weather emergencies, Fairville follows the decision of the Kennett Consolidated School District for school closings and/or delayed openings or early dismissals. In the event of foul weather, before or during school, please call Kennett's Transportation Hotline (610-444-7456) for a recorded message about school closings, delays, or early dismissals. Or, call Fairville (610-388-1268) as our voicemail message will be updated with the necessary information.

