

Little Panthers Preschool Newsletter

We are the "first step" of District OR-1 Public
Schools

Let It Snow Let It Snow...

What has 24 mittens, 24 snow boots, 12 hats, 12 zippers, and 12 VERY excited preschool students? The day we planned to play outside in the snow! The drifts around our play equipment were deeper than many of our students are tall but that did not slow any of them down. Several calls for help after getting high centered, losing a boot in the snow, or falling, floundering and not being able to get back up were heard along with lots of giggles and exclamations of astonishment. All in all it was a very successful day!

We spent a lot of our Circle Time reading books about snow, snowmen, and other winter themes in January, we made snowmen, created a "Blizzard in a Bottle" and played "Count the Snowballs" many times with our own supply of fluffy white cotton snowballs. Even with all the snow-fun we were all glad to see January leave and February arrive. It' is still winter but spring is coming!

What is a Groundbear?

That is a great question! We decided that living so far from Pennsylvania's Puxatomy Phil and even the famous Unadilla Bill made it hard for our students to really understand what it means to see your shadow. Our solution could be seen sitting in a small rocking chair our in our play yard the night of February 1 waiting for the morning of Groundhog Day. We came up with our own big brown stuffed bear and named him our Groundhog-Bear or Groundbear for short!

We had all made our own prediction on a chart the day before and talked a lot about what the word prediction meant. We asked everyone who came in our room Monday, (Mr. Robb, some parents, some grandparents, and Mrs. Goodrich,) to also make a prediction. So after reviewing our prediction chart and finding our own names to help remember what we chose the day before, we bundled up and headed outside to check it out. We found that not only could our Groundbear see his shadow, we all saw our shadow as well! Six more weeks of winter on the way!

Check out the school website for pictures of both classes outside with our friendly Groundbear on a very sunny Groundhog Day. www.districtor1.org

Our December Caring Project Report

We wanted to tell all our families thank you very much for your help making our Caring Project for Mrs. King such a success. The preschool students really got excited about our penny collections to help purchase Christmas gifts for our friend, Mrs. King. With your generosity we were able to collect almost thirty dollars.

The morning class gave her several new kitchen towels, dishcloths, and hot pads for her kitchen. She was so pleased and so surprised.

The afternoon class gave her a very soft pretty blue throw to use on the cold winter days while she reads or watches TV in her chair. She loved this gift also and was very touched with the thoughtfulness of the students.

Our goal here was to help the students get joy out of giving during the holiday season, instead of always thinking about what they might be getting. We felt that the excitement and happiness the students showed when she opened her gifts demonstrated that the lesson was successful. Thanks for your generous help with this project!

Valentine News

Your student should have a list of names for his/her class along with the directions for how we celebrate our Valentine party here at preschool. These pink sheets went home last week. If you need another copy you can pick one up on the shelf by the door. Just be sure you get the right one for the morning or afternoon session your child is in.

It's Here

The February issue of the Scholastic Parent and Child magazine arrived this week. You may pick your copy up on the shelf by the door. There are some great articles in this issue!

What Are We Working On?

In a developmental preschool there is a lot of focus on structured/guided play and your child's opportunities to make choices and interact in an appropriate way with peers throughout the day. We also spend time each day working on skills and activities that help prepare your child for the move to kindergarten when he/she is old enough. Since we returned from break we have spent time on the following things:

*Opposites *corresponding numbers and counting *"What's Wrong" pictures-an activity to promote logic and reasoning skills *predictions *drawing conclusions based on what we read and know about a character in a story *ABC matching *lower and upper case letter matching *rhyming sounds *cutting, *pencil grip (a huge thing at this age!) *visual discrimination *letter sound recognition *calendar *days of the week *holidays *months *one to one correspondence *shapes *colors and more.

We approach these skills and tasks at a developmentally appropriate level making our learning as much fun as we can. It is very important to meet each of our students where he/she is at developmentally and encourage responses and participation that he/she is comfortable and secure with. Happy children are eager learners and eager learners at this age are like little sponges, it is our job to give each child as much as he/she is able to "soak up" each day. Many of the skills mentioned above have been a part of our day all year long, we just keep adding in new ones as the year progresses.

Our Third Grade Reading Buddies

We will be going to the elementary on February 18 to visit our friends in Miss Winter's third grade class. If you recall, they came to visit us before Christmas and brought along storybooks to read to each preschool student. This time we are going to their room, they will read to us again and we will get to do cool things like sit in their BIG desks and look around their classroom. Stay tuned for more after our visit is complete.

Just a Reminder

There have been a few times recently when your child has come home with a birthday party invitation. I just wanted to remind you that school policy states that invitations can only be handed out at school when the ENTIRE class is being included. I am sure you understand how hurtful it would be to have it any other way and I thank you for your cooperation with this.

Rhyming -Shyming

Helping children hear rhyming sounds is a big step in the pre-reading process. We do a lot of verbal word games that are designed to help tune those ears up. Part of asking a child to think of words that rhyme with a certain word involves allowing "nonsense words" to be allowed. For example: What rhymes with "fog" might generate responses like "dog, log, jog," but it can also generate words like "tog, rog, wog". This is OK; it is helping the brain to hear the sound connection that we are striving for when we do this, not what the actual real word is.

So the next time you are in the car or tucking someone in play a little game of "what rhymes with..." and see what you

hear. You might have to come up with words to get it started sometimes and you may even find yourself saying “nonsense words” to keep the game going!

A Play Production in Preschool

The students have been working hard with their teachers to perform a play using stick puppets and act out the book The Mitten by Jan Brett. After many practice runs the final production was filmed and is now ready for nationwide release. OK, not nationwide, but it is complete. If you would like we will set a day when you can view it at drop off or pick up, it is only a few minutes long, but probably Oscar worthy!

Kindergarten Round Up Scheduled

Mark your calendar for Friday, April 23! That is the day your kindergarten bound student will be attending Kindergarten Round-Up at the elementary school. There are two sessions, a morning and an afternoon session. You will be receiving a letter from the elementary school telling you when your child is scheduled this spring.

This is a day for parents and your student. The parents are given a lot of information and complete enrollment paperwork for kindergarten. Your child spends time with teachers, a speech pathologist, audiologist, and other personnel. It is a fun filled, information packed day and I encourage both parents to attend if possible!

If you have any questions about it you should call Laura at the elementary school, 782-3535 for more information.

What Is Coming Up At Preschool

We will be talking about dental health and how we take good care of our teeth the last week in February. Your child may get to bring home a new toothbrush if Mrs. Cheney's UNL Dental College connection can help out again this year.

President Lincoln will be our focus the week after Valentine's Day. We have mentioned both Mr. Washington and Mr. Lincoln when we do calendar every morning but we will keep our focus on just one of these great men this year. Watch for top hats and log cabins coming your way soon!

March will be here before we know it (yeah!) and with March comes the first day of spring! We will be graphing some weather with little lions and lambs to help us out. Frogs will be hopping into the action with a look at the life cycle, the habitat and some fun frog facts.

This is a glimpse at just a few of the plans; stay tuned for more as the weeks roll by.

Happy Valentine's Day!

Mrs. Cheney & Mrs. Poe

