

JANUARY NEWSLETTER

December Highlights:

I hope that everyone is well again and up and running. Though we had a small crowd for our Family Holiday party it was an enthusiastic one. The children had such a good time and they do love sharing their class time with you. Thanks to all of you who generously provided treats for the event. And special thanks to Kristen Rodriguez for her masterful mass gingerbread house making. They made cheerful additions to your holiday I'm sure - unless they were immediately devoured!

I hope you enjoyed the mitten ornament that your child worked on so industriously during the last week of school. They certainly have their sewing skills well established, thanks to Kavita!

Once again Ballet Folklorico put on a great show. The program, different each year, gives a glimpse of the different regions of Mexico, as well as showing Mexican Christmas customs. So important now days to understand the culture of our neighbors. Thanks to all our drivers and the time you took to help us out.

Hopefully you heard and saw their latest poem - a new one has begun already. Look for your child's November and December journals soon (as soon as corrections are done). The journals are thin because of their Native American projects, a drawing of our class tree, field trips, correction days and other projects that were going on.

Upcoming in January:

Traditionally, January is a quiet academic month where a lot of work gets done, unencumbered by holiday excitement.

I will begin giving grammar lessons with the presentation of the noun this month. Once I feel that this concept is firm, I will present the article and the adjective. As each child begins to understand the lessons, I will be adding grammar to his or her language jobs. Believe it or not, the children love to do grammar.

The first of two projects that we will be working on during January is learning to write a letter, a skill that we hope will become second nature by June. Each child will be writing to someone special *outside the home* to thank them for a holiday gift. This is a long and arduous process, but well worth the effort.

*Your job is to fill out the enclosed form and return it promptly on **Thursday, January 4th**. Delays mean that your child gets behind in the project.* Once the letters are perfect and decorated (they will be treasures), we will hand them personally to our regular mail carrier (he gets a big kick out of it). You'll be able to view a copy of the letter in the January Journal.

In addition to the writing project, we will take the entire month to complete our second project, a book about calendars. This book is about the measure of time. The children love pouring over the stacks of old calendars that we have collected in order to understand how the calendar works. (If any of you have old calendars with subjects that would appeal to boys, we would love to take them off your hands.)

After reading this wonderful book called *Ruby Bridges*, we will be talking about **Martin Luther King, Jr.** and his contributions to our society, and why he is the reason for our January holiday. Ruby Bridges was the little six year old girl in Alabama who went to school every day for six months, by herself, until the population accepted the idea of integrated schools. It is a very moving story and one that the children deeply understand because she was their age.

Finally, we will begin our new book *Little House in the Big Woods* by Laura Ingalls Wilder. A full month, but all settled in the classroom.

For you parents, the big event is receiving your child's report card. This will happen on the last school day of January. At that time, you will also receive a packet of your child's current work, as well as an explanation key which explains the marks more thoroughly.

All your child's teachers will be marking your child's report card. Toni will be evaluating the progress made in the cultural subjects, Florence will mark reading skills, and Stacie will mark the P.E. skills.

Since you already receive your child's corrected work, monthly journals, completed books and projects, weekly math sheets and time tests, and spelling tests, you already have some idea of how your child is doing. The report card is a formal picture of this work.

MATH HOMEWORK BOOKS:

For those workbooks done at home:

*Check the due date on the front cover. Some children have math workbooks which are marked due in January. These books are due **Friday, January 19**. Every page must be signed to show that it has been corrected by you in order for me to consider the work for the report card. All uncorrected books are returned to you to correct and will be marked as incomplete on the report card.*

Please talk to me if there is any problem with completing the workbook on time, We'll discuss any problems and find a solution.

Workbooks done in Homework Club (daycare): *For those children who do their workbooks during Homework Club, I will be reviewing the books with Florence.*

Happy New Year!

Jo