

December Newsletter

Dear Parents,

November seemed to fly by especially with a holiday in the middle and then our long Thanksgiving weekend. During our other days though everyone remained busy with all their daily assignments.

In preparing for **Thanksgiving**, the first graders represented the Wampanoag tribe who helped the Pilgrims to adjust to the very different climate and planting cycles that were used in England. Many lives of the Pilgrims were lost during that difficult time. The Wampanoags continued to teach the Pilgrims many skills to help them survive. The Pilgrims then invited Chief Massasoit and Samoset to join them for a bountiful feast. What a surprise when the whole tribe arrived! The first graders made feathered headbands. Each feather was on the headband to recognize something they did that helped their families at home. They seemed very proud to wear them as we gathered with our Pilgrim friends.

Our December weeks are few but we will have a number of activities going on. They will all be around the theme of "Traditions." The holidays are full of so many family traditions. In class we will be looking back in time to a period about 150 years ago. We've even looked at pictures of Hayward in the "early days"! **The McConaghy House**, built in 1888 in the Victorian style (named for Queen Victoria in England), is a great place to visit, especially now when the house is beautifully decorated for the holidays. It is on Hesperian next to Kennedy Park. The house will be open for self-guided tours on Saturday, Dec. 10th and again on the 17th from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. (\$5. donation suggested). We highly recommend it. We've had many wonderful field trips there over the years. A great step back in time. Check their website for further details.

This "looking back in time" will also be a part of our **Sharing Day** this Friday, Dec. 9th. The theme is "**Something Older than You.**" If your child would like to share, he or she should bring something that was in the family before they were born - something of their parents or an older brother or sister. The children should learn what its background is. With this sharing, they hopefully will get more of a sense of life in their family before they were born. (This is also an excellent way for them to understand and personally experience how stories are handed down from elders to youths, and have been for centuries.)

Another valuable and fun experience done at home, is helping make a special cookie or sweet that is part of the tradition for a holiday celebrated by their family (and not necessarily a Christmas holiday). This is especially great when it's a recipe that has been handed down from elders. We're sure your child would not forget helping grandma make that special cookie for everyone in the family, and knowing that someday he or she will pass on that recipe to their own children.

We will also be enjoying a video of the classic Nutcracker ballet. And if anyone has a nutcracker doll, they are welcome to bring it to class to share.

One last note - We've noticed as the weeks have been passing, increasingly more children have been arriving late to school. As a reminder, class starts at 8:45. We consider anything after 8:50 to be a "tardy." Arriving on time is important because the first activity is our Morning Circle when all the assignments for the day are given, and how to do them is discussed. Children arriving late miss out on this important information and are then unsure of what to do. We simply don't have the time to go over that information again with each child as they arrive. We would appreciate it if the 8:45 arrival time is kept by all. (8:40 is ok too) Thank you.

It's a short set of weeks in December, which undoubtedly will whisk by even faster than the clock and calendar will show. We wish you all the best for the Holidays and the New Year ahead!

Toni and Amira

Calendar

Friday, Dec. 9th - Sharing Day - "something older than you"

Friday, Dec. 16th - last day of classes

Monday, Dec. 19 through Friday, Dec. 30th - Winter Break

Monday, Jan. 2nd 2023 - Classes resume, HAPPY NEW YEAR!