

## November Newsletter

Dear Parents,

-October Highlights-

Our **field trip to Joan's Pumpkin Farm** was a wonderful autumn outing. There is always so much to see and do there. The pumpkins are almost a sidelight. Thank you to all the many parents who drove for this field trip.

We enjoyed meeting with all of you at **Parent Conferences** and sharing some of the work that your child has been doing and what our goals are for the upcoming months. Remember that any time you would like to come and visit for a morning and/or afternoon, you're more than welcome. It's one thing to hear about what your child does, and quite another to actually see it in action. The children are always so thrilled when mom or dad comes for a visit.

In **History**, we have traced the **beginnings of human history** in Africa, to the nomadic tribes crossing Asia, and then over the land bridge to North and South America. From there we learned of the change to an agrarian society in North America after the discovery of seeds by the Cavewomen...which now brings us to the beginnings of the Native American tribes, our next big unit of study. To cap off this past study, we had an **"Early People Feast."** We sat, barefoot, silent except for hand gestures (the spoken word had not yet been developed), in our darkened "cave," and ate leaves (lettuce, basil, mint, parsley, chives), roots (carrots), nuts (walnuts), berries (raspberries), and dried meat (beef jerky). A memorable experience...

Our extensive **study of Christopher Columbus** is now complete, and you'll be able to see your child's project this week. (We had been reading Columbus' journal of the trip and marking the position of the ships on a map each day since the beginning of September). Your child put lots of work into "My Columbus Book," so we hope it will get a well-deserved round of applause when it arrives home. The 3<sup>rd</sup> Years did a particularly outstanding job on their portraits of Columbus done in spices and herbs from India.

In **Botany** we had a good **exploration of roots** and learned about all the different parts and how they work. We examined some roots to get a close look at those parts, and also looked at some larger, unusual ones which were edible (radishes, carrots, beets). Cleaning up the yard is a good fall activity, so you might want to enlist their help for pulling weeds. They could probably give you a good lesson about what they pull up!

Our **read-aloud books** this past month were from a genre for "now you're older" - *scary stories*, complete with darkened room and read to them by candlelight. The children

were introduced to some old classics like the *Baba Yaga* folktales from Russia and our own American *The Legend of Sleepy Hollow*, along with more modern tales like *The Widow's Broom* by Chris VanAllsburg. Also in a literary vein, we completed **our first poem, *Precious Stones*, by Christina Rossetti**. In reciting this poem, we imagined how great this precious gift of fire was to the Early People in caves - far more than diamonds or rubies could ever give them. We recited this wonderful poem to the Kindergarteners and First Years, and hope you also were treated to having your own recitation of it at home.

We had a good launch of **Math Homework books** in October too. This homework should be about **8-10 pages per week**. As a reminder, *the books should be corrected and initialed by you and turned in every Friday. Also, please remember to fill in the log sheet before turning it in.* Children in Daycare will do their pages there, and Florence and Amira will help them when needed, but as we let you know earlier, they will not correct the books. Each parent is responsible for that part. So be sure your child brings home his or her book on Thursdays. Thank you.

Our **Panera Fundraiser** was such a success! We achieved our goal of having the needed 50+ flyers turned in to allow us to receive the maximum 20% of that evening's sales, \$345. **We thank you all again so very, very much for the great enthusiasm you showed in your support of this event.** Everyone seemed to be having such an enjoyable time too. Even the Panera folks told us that when MCH comes, they remember us because we're always the largest group they host. Bravo to our MCH Family!!

To end this big month we once again had a spectacular **Historical Halloween Parade!** Thank you for all the help and assistance you gave your child to "become" his or her historical person. It really takes on a feeling of epic drama to see them all lined up: queens, statesmen, inventors, literary figures, athletes, and humanitarians. We know that a lot of effort goes into planning and putting together the costumes, and also the important part of helping your child learn about the person he or she has chosen. But we think you would all agree that seeing them as these inspirational figures makes it very worthwhile. We can assure you that they talked extensively among themselves about their "people" for days ahead of time. It was a great learning experience. We also enjoyed a very fun party afterwards. A special thank you to the parents who helped the children dress in their costumes, and to all the families who brought such yummy treats for the party. It was a very fun time. Also, we would appreciate having all biographies that were borrowed from our library returned now. Thanks.

## -Upcoming Events-

The Thirds will begin learning about **money** and later down the road, will learn how to make change. It's a good time to have them counting out amounts of money at home or in a store which will give them even more practice.

In **Language**, Second Years are continuing to work on **Root and Compound** words. It is very important for them to understand and be able to readily identify and use the term "root," particularly with spelling. ("What is the root word of the word 'baking'? And what is the rule you use when you add the suffix 'ing'?) Third Years, having finished their work with making singulars to plurals, are working on the very challenging use of the **apostrophe for singular possessives**, and when do you use which: -s -'s ???

For part of our **History** study, we have begun discussing the various **tribes of Native Americans throughout North America** and how the life of each tribe was in large part determined by the climate and habitat of its specific area. We will also then learn about the first European settlements in North America at **Jamestown** and later the **Pilgrims at Plymouth Plantation**. Of course this is all leading up to our **Thanksgiving Feast and Celebration** done with Jo's class. Once again the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Years will be the Pilgrims, so don't be surprised if your child only responds to his or her chosen Pilgrim name the last few weeks of November.

We also are marking the important Mexican holiday, **Dia de los Muertos**, or Day of the Dead. It is a time to remember those loved ones who have passed away. We will read some books about the customs of this day, and have a Dia de los Muertos "altar" with traditional decorations and marigolds. In the upcoming days, if they wish to, they may then write the name of a loved one in their family who has passed away and leave that slip of paper among the flowers.

On **Thursday, November 8<sup>th</sup>**, we will be celebrating **Diwali**, the 5-day Hindu Festival of Lights. Any child who has Indian clothes may wear them on that day.

To supplement our study of Native Americans, we will have a **field trip to Coyote Hills in Fremont on Friday, November 9<sup>th</sup>**. There we will learn about our local Ohlone tribe and how they lived and traded. We will see their artifacts, learn about how they lived here in the Bay Area, and have a walk out to an original Ohlone shellmound site.

**Poetry** memorization this month will take them far from our last poem, *Precious Stones*, and the imagined caves of the Early People. Now we will learn the very modern poem *november sunset* by **e.e.cummings**. (and what is this?? he doesn't use capital letters??!!)

The weeks of November are also our annual **See's Candies Fund Raiser**. We are so appreciative for all you do to support this with your sales to friends, family, and co-workers. The money we raise for it pays for such important and worthwhile parts of our curriculum that we would not be able to offer the children otherwise - like a visit from the Insect Lab this year, and the Cultural Feasts we have throughout the year as we study different civilizations. A big early thank you!

Many good wishes to you and your families for a warm and happy Thanksgiving.

Sincerely,

Mary Anne and Toni

### Calendar:

Friday, Nov. 2<sup>nd</sup> - Celebrating Dia de los Muertos, or "Day of the Dead." This will continue into next week.

Tuesday, Nov. 6<sup>th</sup> - Election Day; Children may have free dress if they wear red, white, and blue or something with an American flag,

Thursday, Nov. 8<sup>th</sup> - Diwali celebration - children who have Indian clothes may wear them

Friday, Nov. 9<sup>th</sup> - Field Trip to Coyote Hills for Ohlone Indian study; Book Orders due

Monday, Nov. 12<sup>th</sup> - Veterans' Day - no school and no Day Care

**Tuesday, Nov. 13<sup>th</sup> - \*\*SEE'S CANDY MONEY DUE\*\***

**A HUGE thank you for helping us with this important fundraiser**

Friday, Nov. 16<sup>th</sup> - Sharing Day - "something you are thankful for" (may be an object or photo of something or someone he/she is thankful for

Wednesday, Nov. 21<sup>st</sup> - Thanksgiving Feast and Celebration in the courtyard  
**Pilgrims wear plain colored clothes**

Thurs./Fri., Nov. 22<sup>nd</sup>/23<sup>rd</sup> - Thanksgiving Holidays; no school and no Day Care

Children are the living messages we send to a time we will not see.

-John W. Whitehead

