
The Tidewater Times

Volume 18 Issue 1

October 2003

The Tidewater Friends Gather Together for Another Great Year of Joyful Exploration!

The Calendar:

There is so much to share! Get out those pens and the calendar. The year is off to a wonderful start. Quite frankly, as one visits each class (even the new friends in PK and K!), one would think that school has been in session all summer. The peaceful focus of each class is awesome.

Please note these dates:

PK and K Seminars: A must for all PK and K parents - 7 PM
 September 25
 October 2
 October 9
 October 16
 October 23

Elementary Seminars: A must for all Elementary Parents. K parents are encouraged to attend. - 6:30 PM

October 20
 November 3

Seminar for all Levels: 7 PM
 November 13th: Family Rituals

Special Dates for K:
 Cloverbuds - Oct. 2
 Bookmobile - Oct. 8
 Book mobile - Oct. 22

Special Dates for Elem:
 4-H - Oct. 1
 Bookmobile - same

Field Trips:

October 13: PK and K trip to Pumpkin Patch has been canceled

October 15: Elementary trip to Bowles Corn Maze in St. Mary's County

October 15: Native American Story Teller to visit with PK and K

October 21: Upper Elem to Calvert Marine Museum for Fossil Day

October 22: Elementary In-School Event - Interact Theater will present Stories on Stage: Playbuilders

October 30: POW Wow trip to Howard County for Elem.

October 31: PK and K trip to Battle Creek Nature Center

October 31: El Dia de Los Muertos Celebration in Elementary

Conference Day:

October 24th: Sign Up Now for your conference time!

FYI:

Just as you are encouraged to attend seminars at Tidewater and elsewhere, the staff at Tidewater continues to strive to improve their knowledge and understanding of development through attendance at professional meetings and seminars. Last year, each staff member attended such seminars, such as the Language and Reading Courses at the Lab School and Professional Associations. Already this year, members of the staff have registered for the Reading Seminar sponsored by the Maryland Hearing Speech and Language Association. This seminar will also address the auditory processing and the hearing mechanism of school aged children. Several staff

members are attending the Kennedy Center Workshops in the evening to explore music, puppetry and movement. The entire staff attends one or both Adlerian workshops each year which help us to understand the purpose of behavior and give us insights into our own! Our homework calendars are full too so we truly understand the investment of time beyond the "work day" for children. We embrace these opportunities for they invite and challenge us to become wiser as we work with your children.

PK News:

What an incredible start to a new year! What a special community of friends! Each year sends new friends to Tidewater and PK is the place where most of our Tidewater children begin school and experience a social community. It is a place of foundation building for SELF. Here young children move from the small world of ME to the world of self *in* community. The young child has spent the first 3 to 4 years of life learning language and now that language becomes a tool to negotiate, to request, to share. This is the foundation for life - the roots, the footings - whatever you would like to name the support structure for the rest of life. This is such an important time in the life of the child.

I must restate again the message presented at Back to School Night for PK and K: **Play is the work of the child. Play for**

2

adults is different. We step aside from our daily reality to enter into another reality we see as play. For children, play is the only reality and the vehicle for “advancing forward into new stages of mastery.” (Erikson) Our adult perception of play is indeed one of the greatest misperceptions of childhood and creates in us the tragic tendency to minimize play as important.

How often have you heard someone say: *If you don't finish your work, you cannot play.* Stay with that thought a while and ponder it. To a child, all play is work and work is play. When we categorize and create our own hierarchy of labeling which activities are one or the other, we set children up for having “bad attitudes” about their time with certain activities. It would be far more accurate to state: *You must finish one activity before you proceed to the next.* Completion of an activity for a young child might simply be cleaning up on one task before initiating another. **Play is their work.**

Ponder this:

Play allows us to discover:

Sound by listening.

Gravity by hopping, jumping and falling down!

Color by mixing.

Shape by creating.

Geometry by building.

Time by waiting.

Self by being with others

Causality by experience.

Social reality through make believe fun!

Ponder this:

Practice makes perfect

You learned your sounds through playing with your mouth. You learned to walk by falling down over and over again. You skinned your knees as you persisted in learning to balance your body on your bike. Time is so important. Children seek to perfect through practice and we must be respectful of their need to play in order that mastery will occur.

Ponder and respect this:
Play is the work of the young child.

I urge you to believe this and to honor your children. At Tidewater, we focus on the process of learning - how and why the child is engaging in a task. This allows us to observe and to understand so that the lessons we present meet the child where s/he is, not where the teacher is. Schools are for children.

Thus far, our time together has been primarily focused on trusting one another and exploring our environment. We are becoming a community of friends, learning to share and wait for turns. We are having so much fun listening to the sounds in our names and exploring this with one another. Already even the youngest members of the class are clapping out syllable beats and making words with sound exploration. It is so beautiful to watch this awareness of our language occur so naturally and so joyfully.



We started our content lessons with animals. Our visitor, Mr. Michael from Reptile World gave us quite a few great lessons about all animals.

The Tidewater Times

This led us to discuss wild and domestic animals, plants vs. animals, and now animals preparing for the change of season. The reptiles are perfect creatures for this discussion. We have sung many songs and fingerplays about turtles, rain, and trees.

Ah, yes trees! The hurricane certainly has put trees before us for many lessons. The winds shook the branches and treasures fill our yards. The Nature Show and Tells have allowed many children to create beautiful nature mobiles. With our abundance of pine cones, we have enjoyed making bird feeders. We will observe them closely at school and home to see if the birds have some competition for the food!

Spanish has started and the children love this time with Ms. Cecelia. She will share with you later some of the words and lessons so that you can understand Spanish too! Our music classes with Ms. Tracey will begin in October. That will be great fun.

We are off on a fantastic adventure in PK. This is going to be a GREAT year!



Kindergarten News:

The Kindergarten classmates are hard at work --- as if there had never been a break. We have quickly established our workday routine, have figured out what daily jobs need to be done and have been having fun working together. The favorite classroom jobs are feeding the goldfish, Gold Fin and recording the weather by looking out the window plus checking the weather stick

3

(attached just outside our side door). At first the class thought it was just a strange, skinny stick. Now, we are discovering that the stick reacts to different kinds of weather. Look at it each morning as you drive down the driveway.

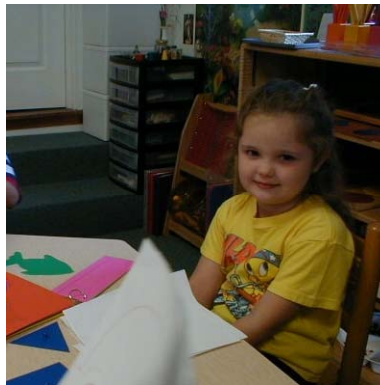
We've already started our reading and writing lessons using shaving cream as well as pencils. We can practice making letters and numbers in all different sizes.

We're working on directionality and keeping our fingers moving in a smooth stroke. We're counting colored discs, apples, jewels and number tiles. We've got some real experts. Lessons are being given daily.

We've been exploring straight lines and the shapes that can be made with straight lines. We've invented shapes using paper, paint, templates and fabric. We're learning the proper names for the straight line shapes made with our templates --- square, rectangle, triangle, trapezoid and pentagon --- plus hexagon and octagon. By bending a straight line, we could make a new kind of shape with curved lines. Our curved line metal insets have been used for tracing, tack punching and inventing new, one-of-a-kind designs. We've been discovering shapes of all kinds on our shelves, in our room and outdoors. Mr. Michael of Reptile World helped us notice the special shapes of mouths, bodies and skins of the various reptiles. Shapes are everywhere!



One of the first books we read this year was The Name Quilt. In the story a child owned a quilt made of squares and on each square a special person had signed his or her name. Every night the little girl put her hand on a name/square and was told a story or memory about that person. We decided to make our own name quilt and call it our Friendship Quilt. We each chose 4 rectangles of bright colored fabric and hand stitched the rectangles together to make a quilt block. We pieced the blocks together to make a beautiful square. We each printed our name and told a special memory to go with our special block. We'll be happy to show you our quilt and share our stories with you --- or look for our Friendship Quilt at the Calvert County Fair.



Cloverbuds

Our Kindergarten Cloverbuds Club had their first monthly meeting. The meeting was called to order and the 4-H pledge recited before our leaders Ms. Laura, Ms. Celia and Ms. Sheila were introduced. They helped us learn how to make corn husk dolls out of the dried corn husks from the Allen's farm. It was a bit wet and a bit messy but lots of fun to create our own dolls. No two look alike! Thank goodness we had help from parents, too, as there were lots of fingers needed during the various knot tying steps. We are entering our Corn Dolls into the Calvert County Fair. Don't forget to visit

The Tidewater Times

the 4-H building when you visit the Fair this weekend.

Lower Elementary:

The Lower Elementary class has been very busy learning and relearning how to use the math manipulative materials: from golden beads and stamp game to bead frame, checkerboard, and rack and tubes. We started off the year with lessons on the hierarchy of numbers from the simple family to the nonillion family and beyond. The students discovered that each number family has a unit, a ten, and a hundred. We have had fun reading really large numbers. The students have been collecting pennies to correspond with our number lessons. We have a jar with one penny (one unit), ten pennies (one ten), one hundred pennies (one hundred), one thousand pennies (one unit thousand), and we are now collecting 10,000 pennies (one ten thousand). We have also started learning about numbers that become smaller and smaller with our study of fractions. I hope that everyone will join us for our Math Seminar coming up in October to learn more.





The Lower Elementary has been learning about the Animal Kingdom. We have been studying vertebrates and have been fortunate enough to have live examples to observe from each group: *mammals* (our guinea pig, Petunia, Caylyn's hamster, Lilly and of course, ourselves), *reptiles* (Ian's skink – unfortunately deceased), birds (the Budd's chicks and Anthony's and Thomas's grown chicken, Midnight), *amphibians* (a toad Jess found on the playground), and *fish* (the blue gills David and Nathan caught in David's pond). We will be continuing our lessons on the animal kingdom with a study of invertebrates (any interesting insects out there?)

Upper Elementary:

Welcome back! We are working with such enthusiasm, I can't believe it is only September. Of course, the first couple of weeks were review and reacquainting ourselves with the environment. It wasn't long before, once again we were writing journals, writing reports, speaking Spanish, organizing UNICEF projects, etc.

A wonderful day was our "Produce Stand Day." We sold fruits, vegetables, flowers, herbs. We collected a gross amount of \$110.00. Our profit of 50% went to fund our future 4-H project – our goat. Ms. Susan Allen, our 4-H leader, will purchase a goat for the Tidewater 4-H clubs and will board it at her farm. We will see to providing care and funds to help her. Maybe next year we will show our goat at the Calvert County Fair. We will keep you posted.

The organization of our fundraisers leads to lessons about money. We studied the history of money (from the early barter system), the denominations and value of our present dollars and coins, the presidents and symbols adorning our money, allowances, spending, earning money, saving and investing money, consumerism, and the future of money (great article in "Time for Kids"). The student UNICEF committee is once again selling ice pops to raise funds for children around the world. The committee is scheduling our annual bake sale for UNICEF. Tentative dates will be November 24, 25. Stay tuned.



Hurricane Isabel spurred students in the Upper Elementary to write hurricane stories. During class time there was curiosity about hurricanes, therefore we had many lessons about the rotating tropical weather system. A few facts learned were: 1. In the Western Pacific, hurricanes are called typhoons and similar storms in the Indian Ocean are called cyclones. 2. The eye of the hurricane is calm with light winds and few clouds. 3. The most powerful winds, with gusts up to 225 m.p.h., and rain, occur in the eyewall, the ring of thunderstorms surrounding the eye. I'm sure we can identify with the following story:

My First Encounter With a Hurricane by Bailey Ulbricht

When Hurricane Isabel struck, I took my dog out. It was windy, rainy and cold. Finally I was inside warming my toes and watching the news for the latest

The Tidewater Times

updates. All of a sudden, I saw something on the news. Something I recognized. It was the boardwalk down in Virginia Beach where I was born. It hurt me terribly to see somewhere I loved and treasured so damaged. The boardwalk was completely flooded, and the news people were calling for an eight foot storm surge. A huge pier collapsed and everything was a mess.

That night, we all slept downstairs in the living room because my brother was freaking out. The electricity went out at 8:50 p.m. while we were watching Survivor. That night I didn't sleep that well. My brother kept getting up and waking me up.

The next morning, I went to the mall with some of my neighbors. We bought some more candles and a birthday present for one of my mom's friends. That night, I wrote in my diary by candlelight. I slept in my own room, though, so that was nice. The only situation hard to handle though, was that there was still no electricity.

The next day, the power finally came on at 1:00 p.m. It was out for forty hours, and that was my first encounter with a hurricane.

