
The Tidewater Times

Volume 19 Issue 4

December 2004

Happy Holidays to All!

www.thetidewaterschool.org

410-257-0533

The Calendar:

December 14 – A Christmas Carol at Maryland Hall – Elementary

December 16 – Elementary Holiday Luncheon/Christmas carols with Ms. Tracey

December 17 - Noon Dismissal for all students - Holiday Recess

January 3 – School resumes

STEP (Systematic Training for Effective Parenting) Program will begin **January 6**. Please read the attached paper and call if you have any questions.

January 17 – No School – Martin Luther King Day

January 30 Sunday: 1-3 pm
Please invite a friend to visit
Tidewater's Open House



Congratulations...
Ms. Jan's first grandchild
Eva Grace
arrived on November 6th

Special Thanks to:

Sophie's dad for thinking of us during his exciting scientific expedition to Australia and choosing the fantastic books for our library.

Joshua's family for two bluebird boxes

Tidewater School families for poinsettias for the hospice tree

Kindergarten parent drivers to the Kennedy Center performances

Gingerbread House helpers

4-H leaders Ms. Sheila and Ms. Laura for all their great work with the children.

All the parents who came in to help with the Ag van. Also a special thanks to Sparky for helping us each day in the van.

Ms. Pat for all of the hours she has put in helping with crafts in the LE classroom.

Ms. Sheila, Jocelyn and Ethan for bringing their friends from Israel to share their Hanukkah traditions with the children.

Ms. Laura, Jonah, and Sophie for sharing the Hindu celebration of Diwali with all of the children.



LE children making diye lanterns for our Diwali celebration

PK News:

"Whether we are a preschooler or a young teen, a graduating college senior or a retired person, we human beings all want to know that we are acceptable, that our being alive somehow makes a difference in the lives of others."

– Fred Rogers

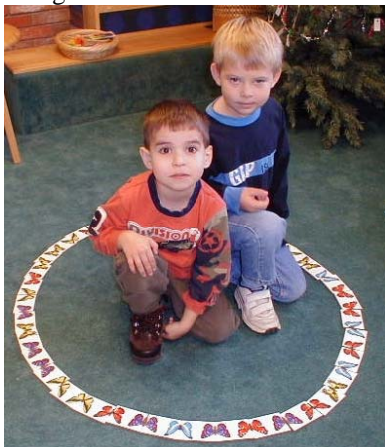
Such a simple idea, but so important in our daily interactions with children. When they know that it is safe to experiment and okay to test a boundary, they learn. When they are allowed to experience the joys of friendship, they develop empathy. When they sense that they belong, they thrive. It has been so valuable to me as a parent to experience life in the Pre-K classroom. I have watched as the complexities of sharing,

2

taking turns, and expressing feelings are explored. Friendships continue to be established and renewed. The group has learned to sense when someone needs to “find their manners” and when a crowd should gather to celebrate a new achievement. They mentor and support each other with such pride. Just imagine what remarkable adults they will become if this is their foundation.

As a parent, it is easy to lose sight of the big picture. Sometimes the daily challenges overshadow the accomplishments. But if you could watch the year in review as a feature film, you would be able to see the cycles of equilibrium and disequilibrium with your child. You would see the leaps in development as no less than miraculous. And you would see how clear the link is between emotional well-being and their cognitive development.

So what exactly is your child doing at school? Well, your young worker bees are making incredible strides this month. For some, tack punching is no longer an arduous task but rather an activity to enjoy as they create holiday treasures. For others, number work is suddenly exciting as quantities become more concrete and numerals are matched with those quantities. Still others are sorting and classifying as if it were second nature. And most importantly, they are having the times of their lives doing all of this!



Tidewater friends complete a tricky butterfly puzzle

On the playground they are mastering the balance beam and zip line. Last week Sophia and Jocelyn visited from lower elementary to introduce head rotations, pretzel poses and a host of other wonderful indoor exercises. In case you haven't noticed, preschoolers love to move!



The PK friends lead Ms. Laura in moves!

A new friend, Gabrielle joined us and the children welcomed her with genuine warmth and interest. Her presence, in my eyes, has allowed the Pre-K to define themselves as a community. They have shared their good manners, passed on their enthusiasm and have been eager and competent mentors.



Tidewater friend in the beauty chair

And then there are the celebrations! We began the month with the Hindu New Year or Diwali. Our classroom was transformed into an Indian home with dazzling decorations and real Indian clothes to try on. We tasted mango juice and made beautiful sand paintings or “rangolis”. Then Saint Nicolas visited late one night and left candies in our shoes! Ms. Sheila's friends explained how they celebrate Hanukkah in their native Israel and Eric from Kindergarten

The Tidewater Times

showed us how to play the dreidel game. Meanwhile, we tasted potato latkes and the Jewish equivalent of doughnuts.

Now we are learning Christmas carols, making holiday surprises for parents and getting ready for the northern European holiday of Santa Lucia and Latin America's own Los Pasados. All this and gingerbread houses too!

As I look back on the first half of the year, I am humbled. By trusting the children and giving them both the tools and opportunities which inspire them and appeal to their natural curiosity, they have made incredible strides. A simple formula and unique to Tidewater.

Wishing you a peaceful holiday full of simple pleasures,
Ms. Laura



Ms. Nancy and Ms. Katie in the kitchen

Kindergarten:



Pilgrim ladies learned how to weave, sew and piece fabric squares into quilts.



Pilgrim men ready to work.



For our sweet bags, we dried lemon balm, Mexican marigold, chocolate mint, rosemary, orange peel and rose petals; grated nutmeg and ground cloves into little pieces; mixed it all together-the perfect perfume to “sweeten” our hand-stenciled and stitched bags that we wear around our necks. (We haven’t taken a bath in nearly four months!)



We milked our favorite cow, Bessie. We used the cream from

her milk to make butter. We put the fresh butter on our fresh homemade bread ... yummmmm. (But you should see what color our bread and butter are now! Pilgrims didn’t have refrigerators and we’re discovering what happens when sample of our food are kept at room temperature. We have a colorful “mold garden”.)



Kindergarten Pilgrims cut up carrot and onions, opened cans of beans, peas and corn for our special recipe of Stone Soup for Ms. Jan and family. We also made the delicious pumpkin bars at the Thanksgiving Feast.



Cloverbud members make special treats of hot chocolate, chocolate spoons and cookies for the Huntingtown Fire Department.

The Tidewater Times



Dressed in the finest Indian clothing, we are ready to dance and celebrate Diwali, the Hindu New Year, with Ms. Laura.



Kindergarten Cloverbuds and Elementary 4-H students were busy sewing Elf hats, wrapping gifts, and stuffing candy into stockings for the Christmas Parade at Fox Run Shopping Center. (See the front page photo in the December 8 issue of the Calvert Recorder newspaper.)



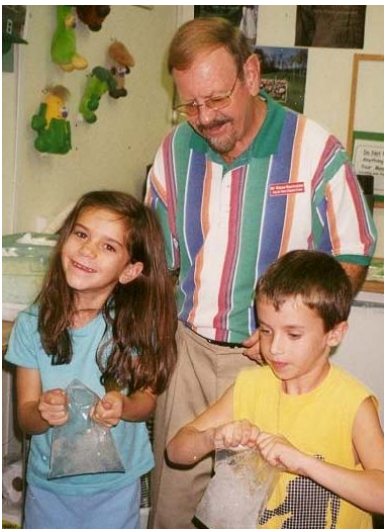
Who’s Got the Melody? Kindergarten students attended a Kennedy Center concert and got to try playing real instruments: oboe, violin, flute and piccolo.

Lower Elementary:



Making butter in the Ag van

November was a busy month in the lower elementary classroom. We started the month off with our lessons in the Agricultural Mobile Science Van. Mr. Buckingham led us through the scientific process while studying various agricultural products. We tested soy crayons, made butter, and studied different types of corn and soy bean seeds.



Tidewater friends
with Mr. Buckingham

We sorted and counted monies collected from trick-or-treat for UNICEF. What a great opportunity to learn about money and to contribute to such a good cause. Your children, through trick-or-treat for UNICEF and bake sales have raised \$700.00 for UNICEF so far this year! We learned that \$150.00 buys a well, providing clean water for a whole community.



Counting UNICEF money

The LE class decorated ornaments for the Hospice Tree, donated hundreds of beanie babies for children in Iraq, donated items to our shoebox soldier in Iraq, donated items selected from the Christmas tree tags during our Thanksgiving celebration, collected and wrapped items for a needy kindergarten class in Washington, D.C. through 4-H, and are corresponding with a girl in India as part of the Christian Children's Fund (also through 4-H). Your children are really making a difference in so many people's lives.



Painting the Parthenon

We studied the artist Marc Chagall in November. Chagall painted pictures that derived from his imagination and his dreams. His paintings are joyful and colorful. He painted people floating in the air, animals with human characteristics and the people of his small village in Russia. Many of his subjects have green faces and are playing the violin. Chagall did go through an unhappy period in his life. He was of the Jewish faith at the time of Adolph Hitler's rise

The Tidewater Times

to power. He was able to escape to the United States. The children used oil pastels to capture the vibrant whimsical quality of Chagall's work.

Madison's father, Mr. Greg, led the lower elementary on a fall tree walk. We learned to identify some of our local trees by studying their leaves, seeds, and bark.

I hope that everyone enjoyed our Thanksgiving poems this year. The children rehearsed their poems many times before the event so that they would be comfortable presenting to an audience.



Tidewater friends reciting
their Thanksgiving poem

The LE children have been taking the Albenesi Montessori Assessment Test this past week. We will be doing this assessment three times during the school year. I will contact parents with any concerns that I have. So far the children are finding the work "simple as pie" and "easy weasy".

Upper Elementary:





The 4-H Parade

On Sunday December 5, 2004, we participated in the Calvert County Parade. When Marina and I got to the parade we quickly got into our elf costumes. And as soon as we got to the parade we got into the trailer. I was very excited because it was my first year being in the parade. We got stockings stuffed with candy to throw to the kids. We sang carols while we threw candy to the kids. I saw Ms. Suzanne watching the parade. We saw Santa Claus. I also read a poem to the judges. (Sorry to everyone who couldn't make it.) Thank you to everyone who helped out with the parade.

The End.

By Haley and Marina



Kindergarten Elf



Elementary Elf

Excerpts from P.E.N. to Paper

Gift suggestions:

Infant/Toddler:

* Books, books, books! I can not stress enough how important books are to a young child! Buy books for your child knowing they may not last for years (infants can be particularly hard on books, even board books), but what a wonderful sense your child gets when they handle a book. For infants and toddlers I recommend books that have lots of repetition and pattern. After a few bedtime readings of the same book, your child may even 'read' with you!

* Movement activities or toys: Buy something that will keep your child physically moving during long winter months or rainy, indoor days....rocking horse or other animal that moves with the child. Remember to let your child play with the box, especially boxes big enough for them to crawl into – that may provide many more hours of entertainment.

3-6 age:

* Books are another great gift for the 3-6 year old child. During your child's early years, foster a love of reading. Stay with repetitive and patterned books that have a clear rhythm. Choose stories that relate to their life (holidays you celebrate as a family, for example). Avoid scary stories for this age group as children have a difficult time keeping fantasy and reality apart

The Tidewater Times

* Montessori materials: Dozens of Montessori companies sell materials designed for home use. Wouldn't your child love to do banana slicing work at home? Some Montessori materials can be reproduced by shopping around. Look for objects (tools) that are child sized and made of good quality. Children can be extra hard on tools and they will want to use them often! How about a tool set to help Mom or Dad with chores around the house?

Elementary (6-12 age):

* If you are the parent of a first grade child, now is the time to buy your child an analog watch. This is when children develop a sense of time and understand the meaning of time. Learning to tell time can be facilitated by their very own watch!

* Start a hobby. The elementary aged child is old enough and mature enough to start a hobby.....Is your child particularly creative? How about stamps and ink pads? Do they love the outdoors? How about a gift certificate for a climbing club? Do they love to move? How about dance lessons? The idea is to introduce your child to different things at this age so they can discover what they really love. If after a few weeks they lose interest, don't lose heart. Try a different hobby.

Several gift ideas are provided, but another element children love is the **tradition** you create around gift giving. Could you creatively wrap the gift? What about a pair of earrings in a box, nested inside many other boxes? Do you guess what the gift is prior to opening? It is easy to give to our children, especially when they are appropriately appreciative. Consider this year giving of your family. Could your family spend time together wrapping gifts for children in need? What about volunteering at a soup kitchen? **One of the best ways to teach a child gratitude is to show them how other people live, thereby creating awareness on their part.**