



Classroom News

This is a wonderful time in the classroom. It is not without its challenges, the greatest of those being the change of weather from balmy and inviting to rainy and unfriendly. The rain has not stopped us yet, though. Leslie and Marjie are out there every day so that the children can work outdoors. We appreciate them so much and I feel for them knowing that its going to get a lot colder and neither one of them has an ounce of body fat! The children, for the most part, do not let the weather deter them as the outdoor practical life, science and art activities are favorites and fortunately, almost everyone has had the water-proof coats and boots they require. The first-year students as well as some of the second-years who had room for improvement are rapidly gaining independence as they change shoes, boots, and even put their own socks back on (sort of) after Walking on the Line. They are all learning the famous Montessori-flip-your-coat-over-your-head maneuver that allows them to more easily put their wraps on. And they are all learning that we need to keep our voices down and our focus on the task at hand when we are out in the hall getting ready to go out. There's so much to learn! Jessica, our bookkeeper, by the way, has been indispensable in the hallway. She "helps them do it themselves," which, as you know, takes a lot longer than doing it for them.



Anika serves herself up some snack, while Charlotte gets started.

Some of the returning students have also been instrumental in helping this new batch of recruits as they adjust to life at school. As the opportunities presented themselves, the older kids learned how to help just as respectfully as Jessica, instructing the child rather than taking over, meeting the child at his/her level of ability and always speaking kindly and patiently. I am extremely pleased. The returning children are getting back in touch with their work, of course, while all this helping is going on. They are good multi-taskers. Many of the children return to familiar materials a little less sure, a little less practiced than they left

them last year. One girl came to my chair several times today to make sure she was doing chalkboard washing correctly. Another boy lamented that he had forgotten how to read and write, somewhat, over the summer. I guess we're all a little bit rusty!

Our study of Oregon is going gangbusters! This cultural unit seems so easy, because we teachers really do know more about our home state than we do Estonia or Papua, New Guinea. We also speak the language!

We have learned about salmon, beavers, western meadowlarks, the Oregon Trail and pioneers, Lewis and Clark, the Dust Bowl, the Columbia River, dams, the Willamette Valley, the Cascade Range, cinder cones, shield and strato volcanoes. The children loved hearing stories about the pioneers' hardships and enjoyed seeing some replicas of pioneer housewares such as the oil lamp, the washtub and the cast iron skillet. The kids also really got into

singing two Woody Guthrie songs that he wrote on behalf of the Bonneville Power Administration when it was just starting up. We've been singing "Roll on, Columbia" and "Oregon Trail." Thanks to Warren Cohen (Leslie's husband) for lending us Woody's Columbia River CD. We've also been singing pioneer-era songs such as "Oh, Susanna!", "Home on the Range," "You



Cedric drawing.

"Are My Sunshine" and "She'll Be Comin' Round the Mountain." I took the six eldest children over to the Benton County Historical Museum one afternoon to see their exhibit of toys through the ages. After I pointed out the items that were of the pioneer era, I let them explore the museum on their own. I gave them some behavioral guidelines before we left the school which included quiet voices, walking feet and pointing without touching. They were all very well-behaved. We all are getting so much out of our cultural unit and I hope it is helping to instill in them a sense of place. We're Oregonians!

As I said, it is a wonderful time in the classroom. We hope that your family is feeling acclimated and back in the swing of things, too. Thanks to all of you for your volunteer contributions, attendance at events and for keeping your child supplied with all the things he/she needs here at school. We know you all have a lot of balls in the air and we appreciate your dexterity! We wish you a comfy, cozy fall! 📖

Newsline

- It's also time to think about **changing the extra clothes from summer wear to winter warmth.** I know... you finally sent in that set of extra clothes and now we want you to change them to warmer items! Please, send in some long pants and long-sleeved shirts. We'll send the summer wear home.

- **Be prepared for school closures due to severe weather conditions** by signing up for Flash Alerts from the Philomath School District. Go to this page: www.philomath.k12.or.us/school_closure.php Then click on the Flash Alert pdf button below for instructions. You will then get messages via emails and/or texting just minutes after the district posts the emergency information. And it's free!

- **Thursday, November 3 from 6:30 to 8:30** is Give Back Night at The Toy Factory. Our school will receive 10% of the total sales that evening! Please come and invite friends, family, and strangers.

- There will be **no art class or extended care on Friday, November 11** – it is Veteran's Day.

- Please join us for a **parent meeting on Thursday, November 17, at 6pm.**

- There is **no school on Wednesday, November 23 and Thursday, November 24** as well as **no art class or extended care on Friday, November 25.**

- **Winter Break begins Monday, December 19. School resumes on Monday, January, 2.** 📖



Lucas works the bolt driver while Ezra creates a pattern with blocks.

Art Fridays

We began the school year working on cloth bags with painting one side and doing printmaking on the other side, then doing twisted yarn for the draw strings. The bags will be used on Fridays to keep ongoing extra projects that the children can pull out and work on before or after the day's main art project. So far, the ongoing project is circular

weavings which will be made into pillows.

In preparation for painting, we've done stroking movements with our arms going up and down, across, and in varying sized circles in both directions. Before printmaking, we've talked about repetition of pattern with shape, line, and color as well as random designs and looked in the room for examples of these. Before the group mandala nature collage, we talked about mandala designs radiating out from the center and repeat patterns. On their individual collages they could choose to do a random design, pattern, or maybe mandala of their own. It was really fun to see the enthusiasm in contributing to the group collage. The last few working on this discovered plucking the larger sunflower seeds out of the flower and arranging these for the last circular layer.

We've been doing some yoga, cross-over brain gym exercises, connected group body sculptures, having one child be a ball of clay and another child gently be the sculptor and move that clay body into forming a sculpture, and clapping pattern repetitions that they can see and hear and then repeat back.

We started water color painting with salt sprinkled on the painted papers that we will use for collage and we'll do another day of creating papers using crayon resist rubbings and water colors before we start our collage work another day.

In anticipation of the Philomath Montessori Auction in February, I wonder if there is a parent that might like to do machine quilting connecting the front, batting, and backing, on a group wall quilt that we will be working on for the auction. (small size, around 3'x 5'). Just let me know. ~Jennifer Smith 📖



Group mandala nature collage.

- Drawing & cutting squash & mountain goat shapes: Meagan Johanson

Donations

- Dine for a Cause Funds: Lohr family
- Art class yarn: Mersmann family
- 2 books on adoption: Hughes family
- Music CDs: Woodside family
- Copies of DVD Pathways to Self Regulation: Matt Hulstrunk

Photo Notecard Fundraiser

- Photographers: Duncan

Year-Round Jobs

- School Chronicler: Hattie Muir
- Newsletter Editor: Amber Grapoli

Our sincere and humble thanks for the many things you do for us and give to us!! We are so fortunate.

Thank You's

Classroom Projects

- Hanging napping backpack hooks: Bill Brock
- Hanging hooks in the office : Damian Lynch
- Hanging "No Trespassing" signs around our play yard: Audrey Irwin
- Laminating & cutting math questions: Mary Beth Altmann Hughes
- Hang artwork in the classroom: Lara Lee-Reavis