



# Classroom I Newsletter

December 2009

There is much excitement in the air as we approach the holidays! The children have grown so much over these past months.... physically, socially and academically.

## The Latest

Mrs. Young took the children across the Pacific to the country of Japan! We spent the first part of November studying the culture and traditions of the Japanese people. Mrs. Spencer brought an authentic kimono and we learned the names for the many parts. We used Japanese words for greeting each other and talked about the different ways people around the world show respect and honor to others. We learned that Zen gardens are a beautiful part of the Japanese culture. The children practiced finding their inner solace using our table top Zen garden. The children were shown the steps to folding an origami crane. We shared the story of Sadako Sasaki, a young girl who lived during the bombing of Hiroshima. She attempted to fold one thousand cranes. According to an ancient legend if one can do so a wish will be granted. Today, children around the world fold cranes as a wish for global peace.



Mrs. Kessinger introduced the children to the fascinating world of reptiles. There are many work choices on the shelves to teach the children the four characteristics that make reptiles unique. They are cold blooded, they are vertebrates, they lay eggs and they have dry scaly skin! Quiz your child to see if they can remember! A few of the many reptile work choices are: a time line showing the life cycle of a turtle, tracing cards of various reptiles and three part cards. We are lucky to have Corwin, our resident reptile, just down the hall. The children have enjoyed looking at him as they walk to Haley Hall.

In celebration of the season, Mrs. Spencer has introduced the children to some holiday traditions of the world. We have learned about Hanukkah, Christmas and Kwanzaa. Many European countries celebrate "St. Lucia" day. This is the day that honors the legend of "Lucia", a brave young woman from the island of Sicily. Lucia was willing to sacrifice and share food with families during a famine. She was greatly admired for her courage and faith. On December 13th, many schools and businesses choose a "Lucia" to come dressed in white robes with red ribbons and wearing a crown of candles on her head. This week our classroom will enjoy sharing in the celebration of St. Lucia. Ms. Martinez from Room III will come to our classroom dressed as St. Lucia and serve the children hot chocolate and pastries.



We are continuing our music appreciation lessons using the Brummett-Taylor program. We listen to the music of a fine composer at the end of our morning group. The children are developing habits of focused listening and are beginning to recognize styles of different composers. Composers that we've listened to in November and December are Byrd, Bach, Haydn, Gibbons, Copland, Britten and Beethoven. After the holiday break we will listen to compositions by Vivaldi, Stravinsky, Schubert, Prokofiev, Paganini and Mozart.

## Reminders and Requests

On wintry days, we still go to the playground for a brief time if the temperature is above freezing. Please send your child in a heavy coat, hat and mittens. Remember to label all items.

If your child has a reader at home, please return it to school before our holiday break.

Thursday, December 17th, is the last full day of the week. This will be a pizza day.

Friday, December 18th, is a half day. Primary children will be dismissed through the circle at 11:30.

# Thanks To You

To the many generous families for participating in the “Angel Tree” charity. This was a huge success!

To Rebecca Frazier and Patrick Duff's Grandmother for making delicious dishes for our Thanksgiving feast.

To the Brocato family for the donation of the endearing book, “The Grandpa Tree”.

To Ms. Martinez for dressing up in the Japanese kimono and doing a traditional Japanese dance.

Again, to Ms. Martinez for dressing as St. Lucia and serving the children hot chocolate and pastries..

We hope everyone has a safe and happy holiday!

Joan, Christie and Diane



Education of even a very small child does not aim at preparing him for school but for life.

~ Dr. Maria Montessori