

November/December News 2010

What a busy autumn we have been having! Besides the many lessons each day, in mid-October we heard stories from South America, read and acted out by Mr. Art Herman, a Donovan Scholar/OLLIE student. We also began our studies on ancient Pre-Columbian civilization in Art class by watching a National Geographic Society dig in progress, discovering Olmec civilization artifacts. The children began working on small clay replicas of the huge stone heads uncovered during the dig. The Martins also invited a friend from Ecuador to give the children a glimpse of his country's fauna and flora as well as some cultural traditions of Ecuador via a slide presentation. All Pre-Columbian civilizations studies and studies of Central and South America are being enhanced this year through the Lucille Little Grant, in all areas taught by our 'specials' teachers and guest speakers/artists.

We celebrated Halloween with stories written by the children for creative writing. We also had our traditional visit from Mrs. Seymour (Ms. T's Mom) who sang her special ghost song and read her own tale to the delight of all our children and teachers too! Pumpkins provided great opportunities for botany lessons as well as discussions on decomposition. We will be observing the pumpkin's gradual breakdown back into the earth of our gardens with many discussions and microscopic observation involving fungi and microorganisms in action.

Our history curriculum has progressed to the formation of our solar system. Second year children presented planet reports last week which has spurred interest towards further research by all children in our classroom. Big questions are being asked about the universe and its composition of galaxies, nebulae, and those most interesting black holes. We are planning a field trip December 6th to the ECU planetarium to learn about the life cycle of a star. We hope this experience will further peak our budding young scientists research interests. If you, our parents, love astronomy and have a telescope, perhaps you would like to give us a call to arrange a star-gazing night in the near future!

Our third year students just got back from their two day camping trip at Camp Shawano in Lexington. From hiking to cooking to wall climbing to nature studies to sardines, a great time was had by all. It was an experience our students will never forget!

Second year students also went to Safety City on November 8th. There is just something special about being able to drive a car at 7 or 8 years old that they just love (even if only at 2 mph), besides learning a few things about how to keep themselves safe!

We also have planned field trips to Raven Run on November 22 and First Years' traditional viewing of the "Nutcracker" on December 14th (more info to come). Classroom IV, in celebration of all the holidays during the winter, ends its first semester with the tradition of making gifts for one another as well as participating in a community project. We hold dear the friendships made in our classroom so we end the first semester celebrating our community in peace!

Happy Holidays!

Lee and Emily