

Winter Harbor Children's House
Spring News 2010

Dear Parents and Friends,

In our Practical Life area we are busily preparing for our upcoming tea with an explosion of teapots, teacups, saucers, creamers, spooning sugar, tonging sugar cubes, and stirring "tea" with a spoon. The children are doing very well practicing their grace and courtesy. Sensorial materials are always revolving and are now surrounded in springtime colors. Our Continent Puzzle has been replaced by our study on Time progressing from hours on clocks, to days of the week, to months of the year, and of course all four of the seasons.

Our Language area has been renewed by all new Spring themes and work choices. The children have learned songs and poems that can be reconstructed by matching one strip for each verse. The children can also illustrate the poems in Art Studio within pre-made booklets. Karen's story time was a wonderful addition to our Library and Cultural study of South America. She read some great books and folktales about the animals of the Amazon Rainforest. Shel Silverstein will replace Beatrix Potter in our Library but I must say that Dr. Seuss and our experiment with "Oobleck" seemed to be one of the children's favorites! I wasn't sure how they would do with this Sensorial lesson on touch, but of course the children rose to the occasion and every one of them put their hands into the Oobleck!!

The Math area is providing some exciting activity with the new quilted mat and the introduction of our Bank Game. One child acts as a banker putting number cards on a tray for units, tens, hundreds and thousands. A partner then goes to the bank to fetch the number of unit beads, ten bars, hundred squares and thousand cubes. The banker then has to check to see if the partner fetched the correct amount. The children love this work! The sets baskets, which isolate each individual number, have been replaced so that we may offer additional Math work choices on our shelves. Lately the children have been intrigued and "challenged" by our new fractions puzzle.

In Science the children have been enjoying our Botany unit. They are learning all about the function and parts of the plant as well as the parts of the tree. The children have had the opportunity to plant cat grass and observe its growth; and the avocado pit is still on our Science table for viewing. We have discussed seeds, parts of the seed and also grew our own sprouts. Each day Amy invited two children to water and take care of the sprouts. Eventually we used the sprouts as a Sensorial tasting lesson and the children had some very interesting comments! We have also talked about the function of the stem and tried an experiment using celery with food coloring. The leaf and parts of the leaf were introduced right before vacation so the children will have an ongoing opportunity to explore these new works when they return. They will also be able to take a closer look at the veins and other parts of the leaf under the

microscope at our science table. We still have the function and parts of the flower to research before the end of school draws near.

In Art Studio all the children enjoyed bringing our "Spring Magic" poem to life by creating their own pussy willow branch. We have formally introduced the Architecture and sculpture of I. M. Pei, and the children have had the opportunity to view and explore some of the most amazing and creative architectural buildings all over the world. In addition to the magnets and architectural blocks to create sculptures, Amy began offering 'perler beads' for the children to create their own simple designs. This is a work that requires much concentration and meticulous fine motor. To finish off the school year, Pablo Picasso will replace I. M. Pei in our Art History area. If time permits we would like the children to create a self-portrait utilizing Picasso's cubism approach.

Our Cultural study on Asia really seemed to spark an interest with the children. They enjoyed the chopsticks transfer work and the sushi work in Practical Life. Lots of children were able to find their stillness and create their own Japanese Zen Garden. They also experimented with chopsticks while tasting Basmati rice. Our upcoming Cultural study will be on the continent of Australia. If anyone would like to contribute artifacts, books or knowledge on this continent we would greatly appreciate it. The children have enjoyed listening to Tibetan chanting and the Asian flute by Nawang Khechog, Classical Folk music and the pipa from China by Pin Yang, and most recently Brazilian music and the hand drum by Putumayo.

Anne Marie returns from visiting her family in France and we will continue to share the French language at circles on Fridays with the weather, calendar and yoga exercises. Hopefully she has brought us some new pictures!!

It's hard to believe we have only five weeks of school left. In preparation for the end of our school year, after our tea we will begin discussing at circles everyone's plans for the future and the changes that will be occurring in all of our lives come summer. This communication is sometimes bittersweet, but ultimately filled with joyful and hopeful dreams about next fall. We do like to reserve the final week of school as a special time for the children; therefore we will not be scheduling visitors for this week.

As May approaches we are preparing for our last formal conferences scheduled on Monday May 3rd and Tuesday May 4th. On April 26th we will post a sign up sheet and on April 29th we will distribute the conference evaluation forms. If you would like to meet with us to discuss anything and you are unable to meet during the scheduled times, just let us know. For those of you who are new to our Teddy Bear Picnic celebration, here is some information. That last Friday we invite each child to bring a "special small stuffed friend" to school. We enjoy one last day filled with French and "teach our stuffed friends all about school." Then at 11:00 we invite all of you; family, grandparents and friends to bring a

picnic lunch, a blanket or beach chair to join us in celebrating the very end of the school year.

Tobee, Amy, and Anne Marie

Dates for your calendar:

May 3rd and 4th—No School—Parent/Teacher Conferences

May 7th— French and Lunch at school

May 12th—Tea @ 10:30 am

May 28th—Teddy Bear Picnic