

The Seed Day Care Center

February 2010

Little Flower

Newsletter

February has been a fun month in the Little Flower with so many holidays, from Groundhog Day to Valentine's and now Chinese New Year. In addition, the children have continued learning all about winter animals in the forest, hibernation and other nature themes, such as snow and ice. Songs, dance, parades and music have added to the enriching (and fun!) learning experiences. Read more to see what is happening in all the classes!

Music and Movement

This month the Little Flower children have experimented with different instruments and their sounds, from drums and maracas to clappers and rhythm sticks. They even have explored the sounds that they can create using their body. In a piece by Hap Palmer, *Rhythms on Parade*, children are encouraged to play instruments and then to make sounds themselves, with suggestions such as "slap your thighs, rub your sides, clap your hands... sounds that come from instruments and sounds that come from you!"

All this music-making gave the children the idea to create a band, which they decided to call The Marching Mice. The idea came from a song they enjoy very much, *The Mice Go Marching*, also by Hap Palmer. It is sung to the tune of *The Ants Go Marching*.

The mice go marching quietly by, Shh! Shh! (First verse)

The mighty monster marchers by, Kaboom! Kaboom! (second verse)

The mice go marching up the monster, Dear! Oh dear! (Third verse)

The monster sneezes suddenly, Achoo! Achoo! (Fourth verse)

The mice all laugh and squeak, "What fun, Tee hee! Tee hee! (Fifth verse)

We are all excited about being a band and looking forward to playing many more songs together.

The Cheerful Chipmunks

Andrew, Annabella, Chad, Kaila, Jude, Noah, Nicholas, Lucy, and Veebhu are learning about Animals in the Woods this month. We are also learning about some special holidays.

Valentine's Day help us to talk about giving, sharing and being good friends. We read two favorite books: "Maisy Loves You" and "The Rainbow Fish." These stories stress the need to let others know how much we love them. They also help us to see how the act of giving has a good effect in others: they feel happy and they feel loved. We counted Valentine cards, little treats and special things that we found.

Lunar New Year shows us how people around the world celebrate the beginning of a new year. Korean, Japanese and Chinese people shared this celebration. Here in our school we read two books: "The Lion Dance" and "My First Chinese New Year." We took the opportunity to dance, march, play musical instruments and bring Asian items so children can see the beauty and all the work behind each craft. The children also had a dragon parades, with drums and music, too.

As we learned about Animals in the Forest this month we focused on wolves, foxes and bobcats. Children started finding wolves in their favorite stories: "Three Little Pigs," "The Little Red Riding Hood," "The Gingerbread Man," "Chicken Liken" and "Dora". The children loved to hear these stories and dramatize them.

They noticed that wolves and foxes are often portrayed as bad guys in traditional stories. The National Geographic videos help us to see how these animals really live in the wild, and how hard it is for each of them to survive.

The Wonder Pets

This month has been lots of fun for the "Wonder Pets". Carly, Christina, Rocco, Jylls, Kirsten, Marina, Kaitlyn and Jefferson enjoyed making colored ice floats to use with "our blubber". When our ice floats were ready, we put them in a large container and set small toy animals afloat on them. Some of the animals got to play in the cold water. We learned how the animals stay warm while playing in the water. We took blubber (shortening) and placed it on one finger. We placed that finger and a finger that did not have shortening on it in the water. One finger got cold and one did not. Guess which one stayed warm? We were surprised to see how fast our ice floats melted.

We also learned about different holidays this month. We started with Groundhog Day. We painted toilet paper tubes, glued pompoms, added eyes, put it all together, and made our own groundhogs. We used flashlights to make our shadows and a measuring tape to see which was bigger: our shadows or ourselves. We used Katie's Room as our burrows. Each groundhog got to crawl through a the tunnel, up a smaller tunnel and then got to decide if they were going to come out or crawl back into his/her burrow. Rocco, Jefferson, Carly, and Kirsten came out and saw their shadows. Jylls and Christina did not and went back into their burrows.

For Valentine's Day we used pink, red and purple hearts for counting, sorting and sizing. We got to pick our favorite color. Pink won, but Rocco was the only boy that day, he had picked red! We hoped everyone liked their wreaths and the card that the children worked so hard on.

We also have been celebrating Chinese New Year. Jylls has been having lots of fun teaching everyone how to say "Gung Hay Fat Choy". We used red circles that we counted and shared with our friends for good luck. We painted our red lanterns with gold paint and hung them up in the art room. We had lots of fun making our firecrackers, which we used to scare the evil spirits away. We read about the Lion Dance, and learned that the dragon

always comes last and that red is a lucky color. We made our own dragon and marched in a parade making lots of noise. The Wonder Pets would like to wish everyone "Gung Hay Fat Choy".

Books that we read this month:

Marcy Mouse, Charlie Brown's Groundhog, Mrs. Vanilla's Valentine, Care Bears Valentine, Guess How Much I love You, A Puppy To Love, Lucky New Year, The Lion Dance and My First Chinese New Year.

Song that we sung: ABC; Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star; Mary had a Little Lamb; I Love You and Wheels on the Bus.

The Jolly Ranchers

Alex, Eric, Lucas, Luke, Max, Ryan and Viktor have been exploring feelings and family traditions with Valentine's Day and Chinese New Year being our themes these past few weeks. And best of all we celebrated Max's birthday!

What are feelings? Who has them? What do we do with them? We started by looking at ourselves in a mirror placed in the center of our table. The boys really got into it as we sang "I Look In the Mirror and What Do I See?" (sung to the tune of Brown Bear, Brown Bear). They were taken aback when they saw how their facial expressions changed with each emotion we were displaying. A few of them thought their angry face looked very silly and started to laugh when they saw themselves.

We used our dollhouse toy families to examine facial features and ask ourselves: What they might be feeling? And why? Some of the children decided the adults looked very serious because they had to go to work and didn't want to leave their children. One child was certain the daddy was angry because he had to work with a broken computer. We spoke about ways to deal with being angry and practiced sitting down and taking a few breaths and blowing them out, coloring and scribbling on paper and pounding and kneading playdough, all ways that helped our angry feels pass. We felt much different after these activities and the children were happy to realize feelings do come and go.

Then we went on to feeling scared. What do we do? It was unanimous that their moms and dads helped them at night by coming to sit near them. Getting into bed with their parents also was a strategy they all agreed made it all better. This smoothly led us into the subject of feelings of Love. How do we show someone we love them, and how do we know we are loved?

We talked about the expressions of love such as hugs, kisses, a gentle touch, and a smile. And how does someone we love feel when we smile at them? How do we feel when someone is grumpy with us? We soon realized it is much easier to be happy, and it makes everyone feel good. The children enjoyed making valentine hearts for you. They put their "heart" on the paper as they glued, placed and sprinkled glitter with their tiny fingers and were asked to write their own names.

We hope you had a wonderful Valentine's Day with your little ones.

This week we are celebrating Chinese New Year! We have marched as lion dancers in our own parade. Then the children chose a musical instrument of their choice to play as we marched in a parade to scare away bad feelings and bring good luck. We set the table with oranges and rice cakes after we swept the classroom to rid this year of bad luck and bring us good fortune in 2010. We are realizing how much fun, how much love and family preparation goes into this wonderful, ceremonious holiday.

Songs we sang:

You Have Feelings, So Do I
If You're Happy and You Know It

Books we read: How Do Dinosaurs Play With Their Friends? How Do Dinosaurs Say I Love You? I Want To Say I Love You; Family Time; Lucky New Year; My First Chinese New Year

Wishing a very Happy February Birthday to our brand new Little Flower, Max!