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Upcoming Events

Mon Jan 3 **School re-opens and the Giving Tree begins**

Director's Thoughts

This picture makes me happy," said Little Bear. "Hello, Hen. This is for Grandmother. Will you take it to her, Hen?" "Yes, I will," said Hen. Grandmother was happy.
from A Kiss for Little Bear by Else Holmelund Minarik

I promised some more wisdom from the workshop we attended led by Roxy about Readiness. She asked, "What is it that everyone says they want for their child when he or she grows up?" "To be happy," was the answer. The next question is, "How do we ensure that a child will grow up to be happy?" Ned Hallowell has some ideas. He lists the 5 steps to adult happiness:

1. Connect. A person must be able to connect with those around him/her. To be able to make a connection outside the family, through sports, scouts, religious group or neighbourhood. To be able to make and be a friend is a skill used throughout a life time.
2. Play. Play with materials, play with other children, play with adults, play on the playground, play with the world around them.
3. Discipline. Children need rules and structure. If they grow up with these, they are more likely to be able to regulate their own behaviour as adults.
4. Mastery. Everyone needs to feel good about their ability to do something well...dribble a ball, play the piano, skate, dance, speak a foreign language..whatever. A child may have to try several activities before finding one to pursue but the feeling of accomplishment is wonderful once he or she is recognized for the achievement. Which leads to...
5. Recognition. What better way to feel good about yourself than to have someone outside your family recognize your expertise.

Some things to think about. We at Bowen are helping by encouraging social connections, giving structure to the mornings, and play, play, play and more play! We give recognition for jobs well done, especially those things that the child has been working on...using scissors, waiting for a turn, or writing a name. Mastery will come.

I am collecting items to go on the Bowen snow person. If you look at the book Snowballs, you will get an idea and be able to help your child bring in something for this chilly fellow.

I wish you all a wonderful holiday season with family and friends. Safe travels to all who will be joining you and to you if you are travelling. Happy New Year! See you in 2011!

Love, Priscilla



3-Day Class News



Happy Holidays from the 3 day class! This week, we focused on Christmas and continued to ready ourselves for our “party” on Friday. All the toys were green and red! We painted “snow” (ivory soap) on evergreen trees to hang in the hallway. We made sure to take time to create gifts for our families. It’s a surprise, but here’s a hint. . . we used water and glitter too! The gifts are breakable so be careful toting them home! Please be sure to take note of the special card and wrapping paper. Your child handmade the wrapping paper using a shape-filled rolling pin dipped in ink. They also took time to glue each branch onto a wreath for the card.

We have been baking too! The aroma of gingerbread filled the air Wednesday. Many thanks to Veronika for the ingredients, Priscilla for her recipe, and Virginie for her baking skills! The children were eager to sniff the spices and to take turns mixing the batter. It’s not every day you cook with molasses and ground cloves! We can’t wait to share this special treat with you on Friday.

Reflecting back on the school year thus far, the children have a lot to be proud of. The children have made friends, have learned to take turns, and how to follow directions. They are (mostly) eager cleaner-uppers and are perfecting their singing voices every day. They are becoming more confident in getting their own coats on and are working on walking in a line. We can’t wait to see what the rest of the school year brings!

Jane and I wish each of you a happy holiday season and a wonderful winter break. We hope you find time to relax and enjoy time with your families and friends. See you next year!

- Jen and Jane

5-Day Class News

Dear Parents,

December Vacation is here and winter is just around the corner. When the children return in January, we will be starting our winter themes. More Bowen fun is on the way.



The fourth “Holiday of Light” was celebrated on Tuesday this week. Christmas came to the five-day classroom. When the children walked into the classroom, there was a Christmas tree waiting for them in the back of the room decorated with lights and a few ornaments. One of their jobs was to make more ornaments for the tree. With the assistance of some red, green, and white beads and red and green pipe cleaners the children were able to make ornaments to decorate the tree. The two choices were a wreath or a candy cane. The tree soon became even more lovely. Each child had the opportunity to make a wreath with green paper and a red ribbon. Through the magic of cutting and folding, sixteen wreaths were created. This was a fun way to practice cutting with scissors. Rice Krispie treat wreaths were also made by using round pans as a mold for the wreaths. When they were taken out of the mold, red licorice was used as the ribbon. This was our special Christmas snack. Christmas trees were painted at the easel and red and green stones and containers filled the Discovery Table. When group time arrived, the class talked about all

the special objects and the special person of the holiday. These were the wreath, the Christmas tree, the stockings, the gifts, the holly decorations, and, of course, Santa. We even sang *Jingle Bells* from a book named Jingle Bells that showed how Christmas is celebrated around the world. Our morning ended with the reading of The Night before Christmas. This was a perfect way to end the morning.

The children have been very busy creating beautiful wrapping paper and making beautiful cards for all of you. Much time and effort was put into these creations. The wrapping of a special surprise with this paper and the attaching of the card was a BIG job done by each one of the children. Each child is very proud of his/her accomplishments!

Last week we mentioned the making of the gingerbread people. This week we must tell you about the delicious chocolate chip cookies the children made. They even decorated them with some sprinkles. As is fitting, Walter the Baker by Eric Carle was read to the children on that baking day. They also helped to put together and mix a special fruit dip that went with the delicious fruit you ate today. Lastly, cranberry juice and orange juice were measured and mixed to create the delicious punch we drank today. Hurray to the five-day chefs!



When hosting a party, decorations are very important. The five-day class took on the challenge and made paper chains that go half way around the classroom. One day the children were given the challenge of making eighty-five loops for the chain. They made one hundred fifteen! We know because we counted together in class. There were some wonderful conversations and some wonderful chain making going on at one of the round tables for several days.

When we return to school in January there will be a new Show Time theme. The theme will be "Your Favorite Game". It should be a game that your child likes to play and he/she should be able to explain how to play it to the children. The teachers will be modeling Monday and Tuesday of that week.

Many opportunities for group play happened this week. The Listening Center was a busy place as each child waited his/her turn to listen to Walter the Baker. Caroline, Emma, Georgia, Gray, and Meg stopped over. Some of the children had several turns. The tubes and balls left by Steve the Scientist were well used this week especially by Hutch, Julia, and Massimo. On the back steps the Kids K-Nex saw many creatures being constructed. Ian, Arlo, Nathan K., and Isabella did a good job of sharing this toy and of talking and working together. It was necessary to be very flexible with this toy and the children met the challenge. Hotel Bowen opened in the block area. It was amazing to see the children build a hotel room for each of the children playing. Some of the children who had booked rooms that day were Nathan J., Samantha, Scott, and Theo. The five-day classroom is a very busy and fun place to be!

Happy Holidays! Have a wonderful and relaxing vacation!

- Barbara and Margie

TK Class News

This week was bustling with holiday activities in TK! The children were very excited for the upcoming vacation and we did our best to harness their positive energy! Each day, while

following our usual routine, we created some artwork, cooked something seasonal, and practiced singing, all for Friday's holiday party.

The TK artists were hard at work throughout the week. Every child made a paper gingerbread house with windows that open to reveal a holiday surprise. Using scissors to cut out each window from the house, while leaving it attached on one side was a very challenging task that required a great deal of focus and skill. Hooray for TK determination! Many children visited the easel this week to create glittery green handprint wreaths. It was fascinating to watch how each child tackled this circular endeavor. Some children were very cautious and used the paint sparingly, while others used both hands at the same time working feverishly to create a thick, gloppy masterpiece! Also, friends shared ideas about how to paint a bow for the wreath and how to add berries with the red paint. Veronika (Sophie LL's mom) came in on Tuesday to help everyone make an adorable caroler from a painted red paper towel roll. These characters have been a welcome addition to our classroom décor and the children had a great time using one of their own socks as winter hats for their carolers! Some TK friends learned a new art trick this week using pencils, tissue paper, and glue. After painting some glue on a cardboard star, you wrap a square of tissue paper around the end of a pencil and then stick it in the glue. Continue until your star is covered in tissue paper and then you have an amazing, colorful, 3D star! All the projects listed above made the classroom very festive for our holiday party.



Thomas wraps a gift in Santa's Toy Shop.

Sophie L. working on her gingerbread house.



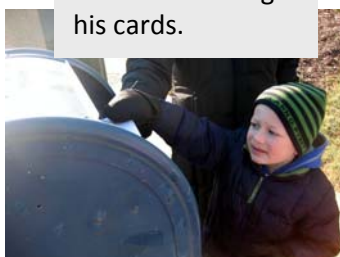
Making paper chains is a tradition at Bowen this time of year and in TK we turned it into a math activity as well. Each child came to the art table twice during the week to work on his/her chain. Each visit, he/she cut a piece of construction paper into five long strips and then selected five strips of wrapping paper to make chain of ten strips (twenty after two visits). Using tape and lots of fine motor skill, the loops were connected together. Careful counting throughout the process was a must and the children were thrilled when their completed twenty loop chains reached past the tops of their heads! Some of the mathematical reasoning we overheard: "I have eight loops so far and now I only need two more." "I have five green strips and five blue which will make ten." "Oops, I have twenty-one. Can I take one off?" On Friday, we connected everyone's chains to make one gigantic chain to find out how far it would reach from our classroom. Ask your TK child if it reached the 3 day, 5 day, or all the way to the big room!

We read too many stories to count this week but our favorites were surely The Nutcracker and Dream Snow. Thank you to Cindy for bringing some of her family's favorites in to share with us! We spent a great deal of time this week singing. On Monday, Paula practiced our songs for the sing-a-long and the whole school had fun ringing their jingle bells! The rest of the week, we sang a variety of holiday tunes during our song meetings and at the end of the day. "Rudolph the Red Nosed Reindeer" and "Jingle Bell Rock" really got everyone using their best singing voices. Our biggest musical endeavor this week was to learn "The Twelve Days of Christmas" and rehearse each day to prepare a performance for our holiday party. Each child was given a line to sing and it was wonderful to watch the line come to life with confidence as the week progressed.

On Wednesday, each TK friend made three holiday cards to send. Two cards were addressed to family or friends and the third was for a mystery classmate. The children put stamps on their envelopes and wrote BOWEN as the return address. Inside the cards, some children copied holiday greetings and others drew lovely winter scenes. Everyone signed their cards before putting them into the envelopes and sealing them with a snowman sticker. The highlight of this activity, however, was getting to walk down the street and



Connor and Zoe working on cards and Liam mailing his cards.



drop them into the big blue mailbox. What fun!

A special thank you to Veronika for coming in to make carolers, Bridget (Thomas' mom) for sharing some ornaments from home and making bead ornaments with us, Lisa (Sophie L.'s mom) for parent helping on Thursday and making hot chocolate and rice krispie treats for us, and to all the families who joined us for the sing-a-long and holiday party!

It has been a terrific 2010 in TK and we are looking forward to seeing everyone in 2011!

Take care,
Allison and Cindy

Newsletter Submissions

This newsletter is emailed to the Bowen community every Friday evening. All contributions are welcome. Please send them to mabruzese@gmail.com (in the body of your email or as a Microsoft Word attachment) or place a hard copy in Maggie and Joe Abruzese's mailbox at Bowen. The deadline for submissions is Thursdays at 6 pm.

If you know of someone who would like to be added to this email list, please send along his/her email address. If you wish to be removed from this email list, please let Maggie know. Thanks!



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