

WOODEND WANDERER NEWSLETTER

March 26, 2009

Dear Parents,

Spring has sprung and the Wanderers are busy discovering all of the exciting changes occurring at Woodend right now. We travel to the pond every day to take a peek at our wood frog eggs. They get larger with each passing day and we observed the tadpoles wriggling around inside their eggs on Monday. It was very exciting as you can imagine! The children worked hard to make numbered links for a chain to help us keep track of how many days it is taking the tadpoles to emerge. Today is day # 14 and we anxiously await their arrival.

We spent last week discussing and discovering interesting facts about frogs and toads. We learned all about their life cycles and spent time sequencing pictures of eggs, tadpoles, froglets, and frogs. We also used stamps and paints to depict the life cycle changes. We wrote in our journals about the similarities and differences between frogs and toads. The children loved learning that frogs have leaner bodies and longer legs and feet than toads. Frogs have smooth skin and range in a variety of colors depending upon where they live and what family of frogs they belong to while toads are typically brown in color and have bumpy, “warty” skin. Frogs jump higher and further than toads which the children were more than happy to practice.

Daffodils and crocuses have blossomed and the trees are budding. We can hear many different birds singing in the trees and love seeing deer munching in the woods almost every day. We now make weekly trips to the “ultimate climber” and practice our balancing, climbing, and jumping gross motor skills. We also work cooperatively and practice teamwork while exploring fallen trees in the woods. The children searched for ten signs of spring with Ms. Janet during our weekly naturalist visit and collected what signs we could on our “nature bracelets” (tape turned sticky side out!) to celebrate the beginning of this wonderful season.

The Wanderers are becoming little yogis! We enjoyed our first two yoga classes with Ms. Laura this week and look forward to two more classes in April. Laura Bradford, a very talented and experienced (and certified!) yoga instructor is generously donating four sessions of yoga to our Wanderer class in honor of Marcia Sward, our beloved former director of education at Audubon. Laura teaches yoga to our ANS staff and had a close and personal relationship with Marcia. This is Laura’s way of giving back to the ANS community and we couldn’t be more grateful for her sharing her time, energy, and spirit with us. Your children all take a turn with the “singing bowl” to begin class and then work on breathing exercises and animal poses to help strengthen and stretch their little bodies. Some favorite poses include the cobra, cat, cow, downward facing dog, three legged downward facing dog, butterfly and flower. Ask your children to teach you a pose or two!

A core value in our classroom is that all children are good and all people have choices. We consistently comment on children’s choices in order for children to feel as though they have control over their world. For example, we reinforce choices throughout the day in ways like, “Great choice checking on your fallen friend” and “Thanks for making a safe choice in the sandbox by keeping your shovel low to the ground” and “Please make a kind choice and tag your friend more softly next time”. We keep our encouraging words as specific and choice-centered as possible. Rather than exclaiming,

“good boy” or “good girl” we separate the action from the child and therefore children learn that every person can make good choices or not so good choices. When someone makes an unsafe or unkind choice, he/she can always try again the next time to make a better choice. We focus on the possibilities of future success rather than the past mistake to help children feel positive about the next chance they have to make good choices.

We also talk about how wonderful mistakes are because they teach us important lessons for the future. We purposefully point out each time we (as teachers) make mistakes to model to the children how easy and natural it is to make mistakes and how helpful it can be to understand how to make a better choice in the future. Giving children choices is important for their development of self-confidence, independence, and autonomy. It is possible to give too many choices; however, so limiting the choices to two or three things is a great way to both empower your child but also shield him/her from too much responsibility.

We want to extend a big thanks to Paul’s family for teaching us all how to make natural water colors yesterday during their family sharing time. Each child combined vinegar, baking soda, corn starch, and natural vegetable pigment to create yellow water color paint and brought it home in a baby food jar. We hope your child enjoys painting with his/her own watercolor paint at home.

Our Celebration of Spring is tomorrow, Friday, March 27 at 11am. The schedule for the celebrations always follows the same schedule:

11am Sing-Along

11:15am Snack

11:30am Story

11:45am Art Activity

All families are welcome to attend. We always begin promptly at 11am to allow time for all of the fun activities planned. Siblings are welcome but we request the prompt removal of any crying or disruptive siblings as the celebration is a very special time for the Wanderers. Thank you in advance for your cooperation.

Thanks in advance for all of your generous donations. We are in need of the following items:

Tissues (we go through about a box every two days!)

Hand sanitizer

Baby food jars with lids (washed and clean, please)

Cardboard egg cartons

Please remember:

Our classroom is sugar-free and peanut-free. Please do not send any food or drinks high in refined sugar to school with your child. *All foods and drinks high in sugar will be returned home with your child.*

Dismissal is at 12pm. Please note our late fee policy in your Family Handbook (\$10 for every ten minutes, or any part thereof, after 12pm).

Ask me this: What is your favorite yoga pose? What are the stages of a frog or toad’s life cycle? What yellow spring flowers have you been seeing by the pond and singing about in class? How many days has it been since the wood frog eggs laid their eggs?

Take care and happy spring,
Stephanie and Katie

SONG LYRICS

The Days Of Spring (Tune: "The Farmer In The Dell")

The days of spring are here.

Warm, sunny days are near.

Birds in trees, flowers and bees,

The days of spring are here.

BUILD A NEST (tune: "The Hokey Pokey")

You weave some grass right in.

You pull some down right out.

You weave a bit of string in

And you feather it all about.

You build a lovely nest,

Sturdy 'cause you know -

That's where your eggs will go!

SPRING IS HERE (Tune: "Are You Sleeping")

I see robins

I see bird's nests

Butterflies too

flowers too

Everything is growing

The wind is gently blowing

Spring is here

spring is here.

Daffodil

Yellow yellow daffodil, dancing in the sun..

oh yellow , yellow daffodil, you tell me spring has come.

I can hear a blue bird sing, and hear a robin call.

but yellow yellow daffodil I love you most of all.

Daffodils fingerplay

One little daffodil had nothing much to do,

Out popped another one, then there were two.

Two little daffodils were smiling at a bee,

Out popped another one, then there were three.

Three little daffodils were growing by the door,

Out popped another one, then there were four.

Four little daffodils were glad to be alive,

Out popped another one, then there were five.

Five little daffodils were wearing golden crowns,

They danced in the breeze in green satin gowns.