

WOODEND WANDERER NEWSLETTER

April 24, 2009

Dear Parents,

We have spent this entire week celebrating Mother Earth. The Wanderers have enjoyed making a variety of projects at the art table centered around the Earth and ways to be responsible and respectful Planet Pals. Our class garden has been weeded, tilled, and planted with seeds. We had a blast planting radishes, spinach, lettuce, and pumpkins. We even carried water in buckets from the mansion to help them begin to grow. We also planted radish and lettuce seeds in our classroom. The Wanderers made hypotheses in their journals about anticipated similarities and differences between the seeds planted indoors versus outdoors. They are becoming such wonderful naturalists!

Thank you for sending to school a tin can or glass jar from your recycling bin. The Wanderers enjoyed painting the recycled items at the art table and then re-purposing them as flowerpots in our classroom. Sunflower seeds were planted in the recycled flower pots and the Wanderers are anxiously awaiting the sight of the first sprouts.

Sam the snake (our beloved class pet) captured our attention more often than usual lately as she worked hard to prepare and finally shed her skin. The Wanderers waited for weeks and checked on Sam every day, noting the changes in his behavior and appearance as the day to shed her skin came nearer. You can imagine how excited the children were to arrive to school and notice Sam had shed her skin on Earth Day! We decided Sam must be a true Planet Pal just like us.

We began our last cycle of the Person of the Day this week and the new line of The News reads “_____ is special!” We read the POD’s “I Am Special” book during Morning Meeting and the POD shares his/her poster filled with pictures and drawings that show how he/she is unique. We hope you had fun creating this poster with your child. The children have been beaming with pride as they share them with the class. We are keeping the posters displayed in our Art Gallery but they will be returned at the end of the school year. Many children wanted to bring their “I Am Special!” book home with them as soon as it was complete. **Please send your child’s “I Am Special” book BACK to school with your child for his/her POD day so we can read it together at Morning Meeting.** The POD schedule is as follows: Monday, 4/27 - Lila; Tuesday, 4/28 - Lottie; Wednesday 4/29 - Mae; Thursday 4/30 - Micah; Friday, May 1 - Natalie; Tuesday, 5/5 - Nate; Wednesday, 5/6 - Nicholas; Thursday, 5/7 - Nikki; Friday, 5/8 - Paul; Monday, 5/11 - Riley; Tuesday, 5/12 - Samantha; Wednesday, 5/13 - Tyler

This can be a difficult time of year for some of our preschool students and families. Children are attending Kindergarten open houses and are being asked by a host of different adults about what school they will be attending the following year. It is confusing for little ones that are naturally totally centered on the present to think of the future. To many children, school equals Nature Preschool. Another school is an unknown and as we all know, the unknown can be scary and worrisome for people of all ages. All children benefit from reminders that they are safe and secure and have parents that will always take care of them and make good decisions for them. We urge you to avoid all conversations about Kindergarten at the Nature Preschool to limit the stress and

anxiety some of our students are feeling right now. Please also remember what little sponges your children's minds are – while children may appear very engrossed in an activity, they are still listening and absorbing every word you say. Reassure your child that there is a lot of time left at the Nature Preschool and an entire summer of fun before Kindergarten begins. Also, your child may benefit from reminders that even though all of the Wanderers won't be in the same class next year it is always possible to have play dates together. Please don't hesitate to contact us with specific questions during this time of transition. We are happy to offer support and insight as well as give you information about behaviors we observe in the classroom.

Your children participated in ANS's 29th Annual Bloomin' Birdathon today! This is a fun outdoor activity which raises funds for ANS's educational and conservation programs. The Wanderers took a hike with binoculars in hand and identified seven different species of birds! Your child came home with a special sticker book with stickers of many of the birds we found today. **Please support your child's efforts by sponsoring Nature Preschool in the Bloomin' Birdathon with a tax-deductible donation.** There is a slip of paper with this information in your child's Wanderer bag. ANS, like most non-profits, depends on generous donations from members to help support its programs. There has been a drastic decrease in the amount of donations ANS is receiving due to the state of the economy and we would love your support in the Bloomin' Birdathon. The preschoolers' participation in the event will be highlighted in the ANS bookshop this month in an effort to encourage other people to sponsor our class.

Parent-teacher conferences will be held on Friday, May 15 and Monday, May 18. We look forward to discussing your child's incredible growth and development throughout the school year during conferences. There will be a sign-up sheet available in the cubby room beginning this Monday.

The Audubon Nature Fair is next Sunday, May 3, from 11am to 5pm! This is a wonderful event for the whole family and we hope to see you there. THANK YOU to all of our families that have volunteered their time to help out at the preschool booth as well as those who have volunteered to bake delicious treats to sell at the Nature Fair. All proceeds from the bake sale will benefit the Nature Preschool. We are still looking for some volunteers to make tasty items such as rice crispy treats, small loaves of flavored breads, fruit and nut bars, or anything else the creative chef in you (and your child!) can brainstorm. As you know, cooking with children is a wonderful activity that bolsters self-esteem, teaches important math, organizational, science, and pre-literacy skills, encourages problem solving skills and is down right fun! Also, your child will love to be involved in a one-on-one project with you that directly benefits their school! Enjoy the experience and thanks in advance.

Ask me this: What birds did you see in the birdathon (cardinal, blue jay, robin, hawk, wood thrush, dove, wren)? How did you celebrate Earth day? How are you a Planet Pal? What did you plant in your garden? What did you plant in your classroom? Do you think the seeds will grow the same or differently inside versus outside? What exciting event happened with Sam this week? Who read stories to you today with a feather in his hat? What type of feather was it?

Have a wonderful weekend,
Stephanie and Katie

SONG LYRICS

Reduce, Re-use, Recycle (Sung to Eensy, Weensy Spider)

Reduce, Re-use, Recycle, three words that we all know
We have to help our planet, so we can live and grow
We might be only children, but we will try, you'll see
And we can save this planet, it starts with you and me

Recycle (Sung to Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star)

We recycle what we use
Separate things and you can too
Glass and Paper, Plastic, Tin
Go in our recycling bin
We must start now, we can't wait
Quick or it will be too late!

This Old Earth (*to the tune of "This Old Man"*)

This old earth
Needs our help
To stay fresh and clean and green
With a pick it up; pitch it in; and throw it in the can--
This old earth needs a helping hand!

Working on Recycling (*to the tune of "I've Been Working on the Railroad"*)

We've been working on recycling
All the trash we can
We've been working on recycling
It's a very simple plan
Separate your glass and paper
And your plastic and tin
Take the trash you've recycled...
To the recycling bin!!!

Reduce Reuse Recycle (*to the tune of "The More We Get Together"*)

Reduce Reuse Recycle
Recycle... recycle
Reduce Reuse Recycle
It's easy to do
Cause your trash
And my trash
Make up way
Too much trash
Reduce, Reuse, Recycle
Its easy to do!

Planting Time Sung to: "Row, Row, Row Your Boat"

Dig, dig, dig the earth
Then you plant your seeds
A gentle rain
And bright sunshine
Will help your flowers grow

Seeds Sung to: "Twinkle, twinkle little star"

Dig a hole deep in the ground
Spread some tiny seeds around
Pat them down - so they will keep
They are lying fast asleep
Rain will help the seeds to grow
Sunshine keeps them warm I know

I'm a Tiny Seed Sung to: "I'm a Little Teapot"

I'm a tiny seed, deep in the ground
I lie asleep - I don't make a sound
I am waking up now - see me sprout

The Seed Cycle Sung to: "Farmer in the Dell"

The Wanderers plant their seeds
The Wanderers plant their seeds
Hi Ho the dairy-o,
The Wanderers plant their seeds

other verses:

The rain begins to fall...
The sun begins to shine...
The seeds begin to sprout..
The plants grow big and tall...