

Dear Families,

Welcome to 2016! One of the exciting things we will be doing is taking walking field trips through the neighborhood. Next week, we'll take small groups of children over a small bridge to see goats at a nearby school. We'll read "The Three Billy Goats Gruff" and act it out on the bridge. Many of the children are **very** excited about the field trips and keep asking if this is the day we will finally go for our walk. A reminder: NO SCHOOL Monday, the 18th in observance of Martin Luther King Day.

Another exciting event is we are welcoming a student teacher from the U of A, Katie Michalski. Katie interned in our classroom last semester and student teaches this semester. U of A has a high-quality teacher preparation program and we love being a part of it.

Some overdue "thank yous" are due to parents who have donated time, citrus, used clothing, books, mat covers, and strider bicycles to the preschool, we cannot thank you enough.



In December, we read books about winter and about bears including "The Mitten," and "The Bear & Friends" series by Karma Wilson. We acted out "The Mitten" by pretending a yellow blanket was a mitten and we were the animals who crawled inside. We played games to help us remember the sequence of events in "Bear Wants More" and we made a cave and pretend fire so children could act out scenarios from "The Bear & Friends" series of books. Young children need lots of opportunities to use their imaginations & lots of different ways to engage in play-based literacy activities.



Art with Carolyn King focused on shapes and elements of making faces. We have the end-goal of making self-portraits on paper and in clay when we are done with our time with her.

P.E. Day.

On Wednesdays, we break into small-groups for Physical Education or P.E. Here, children build upper-body strength and bilateral coordination (using both hands together) by pulling themselves forward on the rope to advance the scooter board. This activity doesn't look like a literacy activity, but it builds the skills children need to become strong readers. and writers.



Children ride the Strider bikes donated to our school by a parent. The bikes don't have pedals or training wheels which allows children to concentrate on balancing & steering the bike.

Based on the success and student enthusiasm for our Monday "Game Days," we have designated Tuesdays as "Everybody Plays with Blocks Day." In-depth experiences playing with blocks lead to academic & social growth. When adults skillfully facilitate block play by talking with children about their constructions, modeling mathematical and physical science words, & add new materials to extend the play, children learn even more.

