

# Northeast Classroom News

## April 2010



Colorado springtime is here; cool mornings, warm days, sudden shifts in weather reminding us of seasons past! When discussing springtime in our classroom, children were excited about grass, flowers, and leaves growing, birds coming back, beginning to plant gardens, and seeing more insects and spiders. A few children noted that it does still snow in spring and that this snow is likely to be wetter (good for making snowmen!). Many were excited about the prospect of “wearing whatever they want”, skirts and dresses, and that favorite Buzz Light Year shirt coming back into their wardrobe. Lately, the children are experiencing the life cycle of the cottonwood tree as its buds are opening and they are collecting the fallen flowers for hands on discovery.



**A Fun Day for a Play...** Our children got to bring in spring with laughter during our annual springtime visit from Leroy, acting out a comedic version of Johnny Appleseed. Leroy comes and puts on plays several times a year and the children catch on quickly to his jokes.



### Seasonal Changes...

As it is getting warmer in the morning, we will be beginning our day on the playground starting at 8:00 and transitioning inside beginning at 8:30. Thank you for bringing extra layers to accommodate our changing weather throughout the day. On days that are especially chilly, we will be inside.

This is a good time to check cubbies and make sure there is a variety of clothing available (long and short options). It's also time to begin bringing in sunhats, sunglasses, and sunscreen. (Picture a Colorado springtime getup with snow pants, short sleeves, and sunglasses!) Sunhats may be stored on the rack previously reserved for mittens and sunglasses are kept in shoe cubbies. For hats, brims that go all the way are a great way to keep sun off of necks and ears, and as always, please remember to label all items coming to school. Sunscreen caddies are available in our entry for sunscreen labeled with first *and* last names.

## Classroom Happenings...

During the month of March, we studied Asia and its various cultures. Children enjoyed working with dolls from China, India, Japan, and Russia as well as making booklets of the animals from this vast continent. A few children who consistently name the tiger or the panda as their favorite were quite pleased! We made peacocks and Japanese fans in art, and listened to a variety of Asian music. The children noted the most unusual for them was the monks chanting. We had to listen very carefully to determine whether the sounds we were hearing were voices or instruments.



We were lucky to have Ling Chu give a presentation on China, and the children got to see and touch many items used in China, such as red pockets, dancing dragons, a Chinese newspaper, and a lovely new suit. Thank you, Sophie Wong and her family for sharing the puzzles with Chinese characters for animals and numbers! Thank you, Ali Eslich and her family for sharing the beautiful sushi set!

In April, we begin our study of Africa and Arachnids. Children have been making their own strips of Kente cloth, a fabric traditionally woven in Ghana. With this project, we are also showing them the looms that the Kente cloth is woven on and talking about what the different colors symbolize. The children are becoming experts in mixing primary colors to make the secondary colors.





Our study of Arachnids overlaps wonderfully with a rise in Arachnids presenting themselves in the classroom. We have been using the bug catcher donated earlier in the year A LOT! This means that we are having plenty of opportunities to see the arachnids' two body parts (cephalothoraxes and abdomens) as well as their eight legs, fangs, eyes and spinnerets. The children had fun drawing an arachnid and making sure to put lots of hairs on it. Fortunately for many, our average arachnid found in Colorado is not poisonous (we do talk about black widow safety) and are also quite small. Larger specimens are available to look at and look up in our spider guide. The children are also learning about the webs that they make. What if we had no

arachnids? Insects would bury us in a matter of days!



(Children enjoying the last of our snowy days! Wet spring snow makes good cakes and mountains!)



### Spanish...

We have been using the Spanish language to talk about all of our topics since the school year started. This helps reinforce the vocabulary that the children have already learned (colors, animals, shapes, family, fruits and vegetables).

We continue speaking Spanish during the entire day and giving instructions to the children using the Spanish language in every activity in the classroom. During Spanish line time, we sing all the songs and learn about our topics. Some parents have asked for some instructions in Spanish that they can practice at home with their children. We are very excited to have you extend our Spanish language program at home:

**Lavate las manos.....Wash your hands.**

**Cambiate los zapatos..... Change your shoes.**

**Ponte tu gorro..... Put your hat on.**



Do you hear your children sing Spanish songs at home or on the way to school? We do have a compact disc that can be useful for your family. Please feel free to request the compact disc and learn with your child too!!!

### **Dates to Remember:**

**April 23 (Friday):** Our Afternoon 4:00-6:00. (Come see your child working in the classroom! See the growth from the fall!)

**April 30 and May 3:** Portfolio Presentations (School closed to children; childcare provided during your meeting time.)

### **Sounds of the Week:**

**April 12:** z

**April 19:** y

**April 26:** sh

**May 4:** th

**May 10:** ch

**April Units: Africa and Arachnids**

**May Units: Europe and Insects**

### **In Gratitude:**

THANK YOU to Ben, Lucas, Casey, Justin, Carmen, Alexei, and Hannah for bringing crickets for Mr. Ryan!

THANK YOU to Margaret Wong, Brian and Donna Mattson, Katie Beer, Nicole Hockin, and Tami Eslich for coming into to read to us! The children really enjoy sharing you with their friends!

**P.S.** If you have necklaces from school that your child is "done" with, please return them to our big bead jar in the entry so they can repeat the process!

With Warm Thanks,  
Jennifer, Gaby, & Thea