

Dear Parents,

November 28, 2017

I hope you all enjoyed the Thanksgiving holiday. It's always nice to have a break but just as nice to return and see our friends again. The snow is fun and gives the children renewed energy outside. We've started sledding so they encounter many things. For example, they work on taking turns and sharing sleds, walking up the side rather than in the middle of the hill, coordination as they try and get into their sleds at the top of the hill. They also start to see what type of snow works best for sledding, which sleds are faster and, that when it's warmer you can make snowmen and snowballs!

Last week we had a fire safety presentation. The children loved it. They were very attentive and answered questions. No one was scared by the fireman in his equipment and hopefully the children went home and told you something they learned. There are still fire hats and cups in the hall if you haven't taken one yet.

We enjoyed making our lanterns in November. I told *Mother Earth and the Lantern*. I use my Mother Earth rod puppet. She knows she has to collect the seed babies before they get too cold outside. She calls on her friend Pip the Gnome who helps gather the seeds and bring them to her. The children were intrigued by the puppet and watched with great interest. Our Circle was also about gathering seeds. We were gnomes who used our lanterns to see in the dark as we gathered seeds to bring to dear Mother Earth.

We had a great time with our Lantern Circle. The day of the Lantern Walk I led the children through the hallway and we carried our lanterns and sang through Miss Rebecca's room, and then through Miss Cassie's room. I hope you enjoyed the walk at Will Rogers. No matter how organized we try and make it, it still feels a little confusing to me so thanks for your participation and patience.

The week before Thanksgiving we did a Circle about Mother Earth's children gathering corn, paddling canoes and fishing. The children loved moving to the beat of the drum and using shakers and rattles. We invited Miss Rebecca's class to join our Circle on the Tuesday before the break.

Our circle went along with our story *Running Bear*, about a little boy who was invited to a feast and can only bring a basket of nuts. He tipped the canoe on his way to the feast and lost the nuts. When he righted the canoe he didn't realize that he had caught a fish in it so he had something to bring to the feast after all.

Our Circle this week is about animals getting ready for winter, especially the bears preparing to hibernate. This gives us plenty of movement opportunities. The children love pretending to be sleepy bears. I love this Circle and story as solstice approaches. It helps us prepare for the cold, short days of winter just like our friend Bear. The Circle involves a lot of crawling and creeping movements, which are critical for healthy brain development. Our story is called *Autumn Bear*, also about a bear preparing to hibernate.

At Northern Lights we like to celebrate St. Nicholas Day (Dec. 6) by having the children put a shoe out the day before. They will find a little surprise in their shoe. We'll do a shoe circle and the story *St. Nicholas and the Pine Marten*. The pine marten is the fiercest animal in the forest and gets recruited by St. Nicholas to help deliver food and coins to poor people. Naturally, this task and love from St. Nicholas transforms the pine marten and he becomes a force of good.

We will do a canned food drive in December so please bring a can for the basket and one of our classes will deliver the food to a Food Pantry drop-off spot.

Also in December we'll have a Circle and story about going to Grandmother's house to bake, dashing through the snow and baking pies and cookies. We will soon change painting colors and settle in with some blue for a while. After the next holiday break, we'll introduce red with blue and they will discover beautiful shades of reds, blues and purples as we progress through winter.

If you didn't have a chance to do a Parent-Teacher meeting with me, just let me know and I'll schedule a time that works for you.

Thank You's

- Thank you to Dani Carr for bringing us many pumpkins to decorate our room.
- Thank you Will Ellsworth for the beautiful holiday wreath that hangs above the ramp. Will's high school students made that wreath and many others.

Reminders:

- Bring in a canned good.
- Garden of Light: Friday, December 22nd, 5pm.
- Holiday break: Dec. 23-Jan. 1