



Windmill Creek Academy Gazette

Volume 10

Issue 4

December 2017

Letter from the Director

Dear Parents,

November proved to be yet another eventful month here at Windmill Creek Academy! The students enjoyed learning about their "Senses," "Thanksgiving," and "Manners" and "Shapes." The students also enjoyed a massive "Turkey Feast" complete with all the trimmings. The cranberry "jello" and stuffing were the children's favorites! Many had their first taste of pumpkin pie topped with whipped cream! It was a joy to see the students dressed up as Native Americans or Pilgrims as they dug into their Thanksgiving feast!

December also promises to bring a lot of excitement to the school as we get ready for the holidays. The Giraffe students are gearing up for their big "Holidays Around the World" pageant which includes ten musical numbers that explore how people in different parts of the world celebrate the holiday season. The students will sing about Hanukkah, Sinterklaas, Christmas, Kwanzaa, "Feliz Navidad," and the Three Kings. All of these celebrations provide the perfect opportunity to celebrate with family and friends. Speaking of celebrations, Santa is scheduled to pay us a visit on Friday, December 15th. His sleigh is scheduled to touch down at about 3:30. Parents are welcome to attend this most special occasion!

Are you interested in giving a gift to your child's classroom? Be sure to look out for your classroom's "Giving Tree," where the teachers and students have compiled a classroom wish list.

If you provide special treats for your child's classroom parties, please remember *NOT* to bring any food items with peanuts. Thank you in advance for your attention to this important matter.

Following are some important dates in December:

Holidays Around the World

A Windmill Creek Academy tradition – the Giraffe students will perform on Thursday, December 14 at 7:00 p.m.

School Closed December 25 & 26, 2017

The school will be closed in observance of the Christmas holiday

School Closed January 1 and 2, 2018

The school will be closed in observance of the New Year's Eve/New Year's Day holidays

Visit from Santa - Friday, December 15

The school will host its annual visit from Santa and Holiday Party at 3:30. Please bring a wrapped book marked "Boy" or "Girl" no later than Thursday, December 14.

The teachers join me in wishing you, "Merry Christmas, Happy Holidays, Happy Hanukkah, Happy Kwanzaa and Happy New Year!"

Warmest regards,

Janine Connell
Founder & Director
Windmill Creek Academy



December Birthdays

West B - December 2
Luna V - December 4
Brady S - December 17
Ms. Ally - December 21
Corbin C - December 24
Ms. Iris - December 21
Brantley W - December 30



Evelynn enjoys the Thanksgiving Feast

Character Training

December's Character Training Values
Joyfulness ... Cheer and Optimism
Wisdom ... Good Judgement and Prudence



Windmill Creek Academy Classroom Updates

Bunnies

The Bunny classroom is an active place! We have crawling and almost walking Bunnies! Ainslee is eating pick-up food. She loves avocado and she is almost crawling. John is very alert and starting to babble. He loves cuddles! Leighton is crawling, pulling herself up and learning to say her name. She will be moving up to the Cubs class and we will miss her! Lucas is almost sitting unassisted. He is eating cereal and loves to play with toys. Noah is trying to crawl and he is pulling himself up. He loves prunes and sweet potato! Mable is sitting unassisted. She is eating her Mom's homemade food. She loves her big sister Devan in the Bears' class. Vivienne is all smiles! She loves to watch her friends play and is alert and curious! We love our Bunnies and can't wait for them to celebrate their first holiday season with us!

Ms. Iris, Ms. Kaira, Ms. Lindsey & Ms. Maria

Cubs

The somewhat cooler weather of November finally came through as we have been discovering the fall season. Quite a few exciting things happened this month. We got a new Cub in our class – Ms. Lindsey's son, Corbin! He is adjusting so well and loves his new classmates. This past month we celebrated Thanksgiving and learned about shapes. We have enjoyed playing outside with the amazing cooler weather and we are enjoying playing on the bikes and with bubbles. We love doing circle time and sitting on our pull out carpets. We love singing and doing flash cards. This upcoming month we will learn about the holidays around the world as we explore new vocabulary and stories of this special time of year! It's great to be a Cub!

Ms. Kayla, Ms. Sofie and Ms. Kaira

Bears

In the month of November, the Bears learned a lot. We explored our five senses of taste, feel, touch, hear and see. We learned all about manners and we practice them daily as we say please and thank you. We are learning about how to share with our friends. Sharing is caring! We also practiced our manners during our Thanksgiving feast! We spoke about what we are thankful for – family, friends, teachers, our home, toys and so much more! In December we are going to learn about shapes and also learn about how children in other countries celebrate the holidays. We look forward to making lots of holiday crafts and can't wait for our visit from Santa! Parents, please bring in a wrapped book by Thursday, December 14 for our Santa Party and Book Exchange on the 15th!

Ms. Ana, Ms. Kaira, Ms. Kelsey, Ms. Lesley, Ms. Mariah, Ms. Rachel & Ms. Sierra

Frogs

November has been a busy but fun month for the Frogs. The students loved painting and decorating their turkey headbands to wear during the Thanksgiving feast. We also had fun practicing our manners. We have been learning new songs, letters, shapes and numbers each week. A new activity we have enjoyed is the "Feely Sock." Ms. Lena puts a new object in the sock for the students to guess what it could be. Only by using their senses of touch, smell and sound, we pass the sock around to each child at circle time. We then try to guess what it is and in the end, Ms. Lena reveals the object – now we can SEE it! We talk about if it smells like anything and we learn how to use describing words. The children love to see what the object is each day. One day it was a lemon, another day it was a wooden block. What will be next? In December the students will learn about Holidays Around the World and how children from different countries celebrate the holidays – Sinterklaas, Kwanza and Hanukkah are a few holidays we will explore. We will make menorahs and a Sinterklaas hat as well as Christmas crafts, trees and ornaments. We would like to welcome Charlie, Mary and Kinley to the Frogs' class!

Ms. Ally, Ms. Gaby, Ms. Kayla, Ms. Lena, Ms. Raquel

Giraffes

Last month was a busy one with our visit from the Tooth Fairy and our Thanksgiving Feast and activities. December will be even busier with preparations for our Holidays Around the World musical pageant. We start with a visit from Sinterklaas and we will learn about Hanukkah, Kwanza and Christmas. While practicing our songs and parts for the play, we will continue to work through the alphabet and numbers. We will start learning patterns as well. In Science, the students learned about their senses. We played a game called Guess the Food – it was a favorite activity. The students were blindfolded while they had to guess what food they were touching and tasting. Some students had cheese, crackers pretzels and fruit. We learned how to describe the items and learned new vocabulary. We also learned about manners – saying please and thank you. We played another game called Pass the Ice Cream. Students had a cone made out of construction paper and the ice cream was plastic balls ... we would use our manners to move the game along. We also learned about Native Americans and where they lived. The students got to build their own tee-pee. In Art, the Giraffes had a busy month ... we made a Bee Nice and Bee Polite Bee. During Senses Week, the Giraffes loved playing with play-doh. The Giraffes enjoyed making Native American vests from brown grocery bags and Native American headbands with feathers. We proudly wore our costumes during the Thanksgiving Feast. A big, "THANK YOU!" to all students and families who participated in our "Disguise the Turkey" contest. It was a tremendous hit and it was so much fun seeing how family members and extended family members voted and participated in this family-friendly project! The month of December will be filled with lots of Christmas and holiday crafts – making menorahs and special Sinterklaas project. Happy holidays!

Ms. Daisy, Ms. Kristen, Ms. Krystal & Ms. Sammy



Teacher of the Month Ms. Ally



Ms. Ally
December's Teacher of the Month

This is Ms. Ally's second full year at Windmill Creek Academy! She has worked extensively in the Giraffe's classroom and now, full-time in the Frogs' class. "Ms. Ally is great with my child! She loves the children and they love her!" wrote one parent. She is also a great team player and loved by her fellow teachers. Ally is a graduate

of Naples High School. She was born in Peru but moved to America when she was one. You might remember Ally's sister, Ms. Astrid, who also was a teacher here at Windmill Creek Academy for a couple of years. We are blessed to have such professional and loving teachers at our school as each teacher brings her own unique gifts to each classroom! Please join us in thanking Ms. Ally for all she does here at Windmill Creek Academy.



Helping Your Preschooler Learn to Give

By Kathryn Russell Selk

Every holiday season, my family enlists the help of neighbors to "adopt" a needy family — sometimes two. And every year, our son Kiernan has helped, passing out the flyers, wrapping gifts and wearing a huge grin as he helps carry everything to be dropped off. When we started the tradition, he was in preschool, and we wondered: Was he old enough to understand about giving? And is there a benefit to starting so young?

The answer, it turns out, is yes. Experts agree: Children as young as 3 can understand the fundamentals behind charitable acts, such as sharing, being kind and helping. And having your children involved in helping others not only strengthens those fundamentals, but can help them feel the beginnings of power and self-esteem. "Kids like being 'big' enough to help," says Barbara Lynn, a preschool teacher at Lowell Elementary School in Seattle. She sees this especially as they are learning at school, starting to share and "serving" others at snack time.

Create a cycle

Most parents won't be surprised to learn that preschool-age children learn from watching and listening to mom and dad. So it makes sense that parents involved in charitable activities raise kids who, in turn, do the same. In a recent survey conducted by The Independent Sector, a coalition of more than 700 charities, and Youth Service America, an alliance of groups committed to encouraging youth philanthropy, there was a direct correlation between getting involved in charitable activities at an early age and doing those same things as adults. What's more, when parents volunteer or donate with their kids, they create a "cycle of service," with almost 70 percent of adults who volunteer reporting that they started out doing so with their parents.

So how can you get your young one started? First, try to match that first foray into volunteering with their interests. Do they love the zoo? Are they worried about the environment? Do they love to read? The answers can help you find charities or programs that might be aligned with their interests. Then you can start raising money, getting dirty or getting involved!

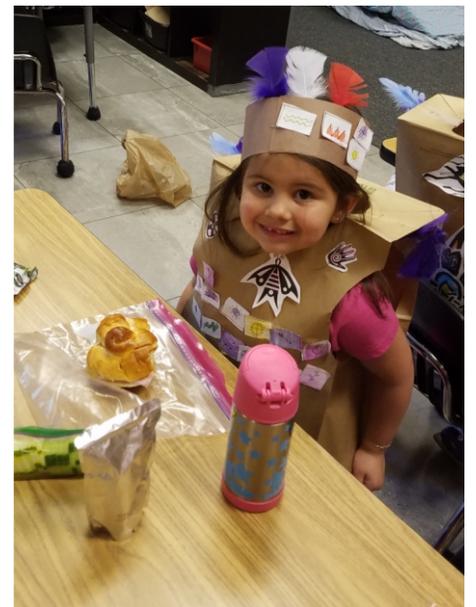
Whatever you decide, getting your child involved in giving can help strengthen not only their skills, but your family, as well.



Emma and Abbie
enjoy the
Thanksgiving Feast!

Owen and Josiah
believe turkey
feasting is
better enjoyed
as an
all sensory
experience!





Enjoying the Thanksgiving Feast!

