



Southside Montessori Elementary School

Dec 2004

Birds

It could be said that Southside Montessori went to the birds this fall. That would not be far from the truth! We studied birds, dissected owl pellets, had a visit from the West Valley Outdoor Learning Center which included a Red Tailed Hawk and a Great Horned Owl right here in our classroom, have had several visits from Little Bean, a pigeon we met as a babe and have watched him 'become.' We watched a video, "C'mon Geese" made by Bill Leishman based on his experience raising geese and building an aircraft to fly with the geese. Facts were gathered, reports were written and illustrated and a new respect for birds was cultivated.

Volcanoes

When Mt. St. Helens began to burp, we jumped into the subject of volcanoes and Igneous Rocks. How lucky are we to have a volcano so close by!

Poetry

Kenn Nesbitt, local children's poet, joined us and shared some of his poetry. The children had been enjoying the books that Kenn gave to Southside last year. I had to chuckle when he began to recite a poem and one child excitedly stated what page that poem is on in Kenn's book! Now, that is knowing your poetry!

Halloween

In October, we celebrated Halloween learning the parts of the pumpkin and bobbing for apples. Anna treated the children each to a pumpkin that they decorated.

Math

The children estimated the number of seeds in a sunflower head, then removed the seeds and counted them: 372 seeds! Sage came the closest with his estimation of 342 seeds.

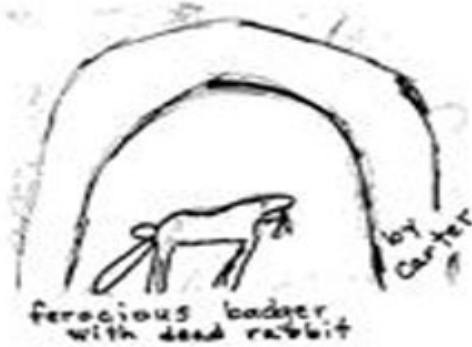
We are now estimating the number of colorful pencil top erasers in a glass container. Clue: the number is between 50 and 100. This will be an ongoing activity. Everyone loves to partake in the estimating activity!

Mammals

Currently we are focused on learning about Mammals. Koko, a well-known gorilla with an amazing vocabulary (uses sign language) has intrigued us no end. We have been collecting and sharing facts at the circle and reading stories of animals showing a wondrous level of compassion for people and other animals. We are in awe!



Southside Montessori Elementary School



Mammals have been sketched (as illustrated in this newsletter) and glue line prints have been made from these sketches. A foil relief project completes the glue line activity.

Outer space

Robin (Brydon's Mom) shared with us the media presentation that Sally Ride, 1st American woman to travel into Space, presented while in Spokane recently. The photography stimulated many thoughts.

Winter celebrations

We are gearing up for our celebration of Winter which includes three performances complete with singing, bell ringing and poetry. The first performance delighted the Manito United Methodist Women at their annual Christmas Tea. We then joined them for refreshments! The second performance will be for our families. Thirdly, we will take the show on the road and perform for the children at Children's House Montessori School.

We will be attending "The Singing Nuns" Christmas concert. We will be making snow globes and Winter cards, and murals.

PE

Ruth Michaelis continues to teach our PE and Music classes each week. Arika (Eden's Mom) has volunteered to bring her guitar and sing with the children as well.

Community Service

The world of the preschool child extends from the family to include the community at school. The elementary age child's world broadens, extending into the community, and then with a grand leap, it stretches outward to a greater awareness of the world.

The children recently took part in the Operation Christmas Child project. We volunteered our services To join the Manito United Methodist Church (where we are located) in filling shoeboxes with Christmas



Southside Montessori Elementary School

Gifts for children in need. These children are in orphanages, war torn countries and areas of poverty. Our families were inspired to participate as well and loads of donations were made.

The children sorted the donations into categories such art/school supplies, toys, candy, personal hygiene and clothes. Students were assigned a category and created a “store,” displaying the goods grouped together. After the stores were organized, the children each took a shoebox and “shopped” for the recipient. The boxes were full to the brim! Seventeen boxes were filled by our families plus 19 filled with church donations, bringing a total of 36 children guaranteed to be happy on Christmas Day. Notes were put into the boxes, like messages in a bottle, with hopes that perhaps we will hear from children far away.

The energy, excitement and pleasure of the Southside children was measurable. We talked about how much enjoyment we received from our efforts.

The children also transported food donations from 3 Union Gospel Mission Barrels in the building to a designated collection spot.

A little closer to home and just as much fun has been participation in the Scholastic Book Classrooms Care Giving Program. Scholastic Book Clubs will donate 100 books to children in need through Save the Children, Reach Out and Read and First Book organizations in honor of our class reading 100 books, which we happily did!

Each week a couple Southside students join the Manito Coop and read to a few students.