

# The Kindergarten Family Mailer

February 17-February 19: It's Off To School We Go

By Mrs. Chien and Mrs. Wells

**W**e are back! Thankfully, the snow stopped, the roads were plowed (sort of), and we are now back in school.

On our first day back, ashes were distributed to the children and a discussion about the meaning of the Lenten season was discussed. This will be a large focus of our religion activities for the next forty days. Check out our class web site (<http://teacherweb.com/VA/StFrancisofAssisi/Kindergarten/t.stm>) for more information about Lent.

We would like to thank Mrs. Alorro and Mrs. Alorro's cousin, Mrs. Uson, for a wonderful presentation on the Philippines. This was the first of our *Celebrating Diversity* presentations. The children greatly enjoyed learning all about the Philippine culture and trying some of their yummy foods.

Word family flash cards are coming home today in your child's folder. These can be cut out and used at home. We have packets using these words at school, which the children will complete as they finish other assignments. These are a great reinforcement to the phonics program and give the children additional confidence when reading.

As your child brings home the word pages from our phonics series, please make sure that your student can easily read the words before returning the sheet to school. This means that your student should be able to read the word with ease without having to sound out each individual letter first. These words may need to be repeated daily for several weeks before your child masters reading the words with ease. **Within 1-2 seconds demonstrates that the word has been memorized and is expected.** Each student progresses at his/her own pace, and we are proud of the steps they are taking to become excellent readers.



## Funny of the Week

- When asking about what Monticello was (e.g. Thomas Jefferson's home), a student replied, "It's a food place!"

Please take a few minutes to read with your children daily. Reading to your children helps improve their reading skills almost as much as having them read to you. Encourage your child to read to you, whether it's an entire book, or parts/words in a favorite book. Any and all practice is fabulous!

Please look to the Special Projects section of this news letter for more information about the Lenten Leaves that came home with your child today.

For our 100 days of school, we were collecting cans of food to be donated to the St. Francis food pantry. With the snow days, we have yet to meet our goal of 100 cans. So far, Kindergarten has collected 64 cans. These cans are marked with a number so the children can go through and count them. We only need 36 more cans! Last year, we collected and fed over 140 families (140 cans). Please consider sending in canned items with your children before March 1<sup>st</sup>.

Thanks to those folks who sent in spoons for use the classroom. Our cup runneth over with spoons and we should be set for the rest of the year! Thank you for your generosity!

We have several reminders for you as we finish up our week.

- Please sign and return any report cards by Monday, February 22.** If you would like to meet with Mrs. Chien to discuss your student, please contact us to set up a date and time.
- Over the "Snow Break," the children were sent home with a Snow Emergency Packet. **Please return these Snow Emergency packets no later than Monday, February 22.**
- February homework packets are due on Friday, February 26<sup>th</sup>.**

## Special Notes from Mrs. Chien

Please continue to work with your children with the following information:

- to repeat their **phone number and addresses**. This is important safety information for every child to know.
- to **make sure they can tie their shoes and zip their coats**. Please help them practice these skills at home.
- to **identify numbers 1-50 out of sequence**. This helps us understand their skill in number recognition.
- to **count to 30** or beyond. By the end of the year, we are looking for the children to **count to 100**.
- to **identify letters of the alphabet out of sequence**. This helps with their phonics, reading, and writing.
- to **quickly identify sight word**. This helps strengthen reading skills.

Please continue to work on identifying numbers, especially the teens twenties.

**Please continue to work on and return the sight word lists that come home with your children**, both on the back of their daily work and the separate sheets which you return. It is important as we continue with our reading groups that the children work on these skills.

**Please continue to have your student practice writing sentences on their own using phonetic spelling.** You may want to give them a beginning (e.g. The best part of Christmas...). Please feel free to share the sentences with us. We love to see their successes.

We are continuing coin identification. Here's a little poem for you to use with your children to help them learn. Please begin working with them on identifying basic coins of penny, nickel, dime, quarter, and the dollar.

Penny, penny,  
Easily spent  
Copper brown  
and worth one cent.

Nickel, nickel,  
Thick and fat,  
You're worth five cents.  
I know that.



Dime, dime,  
Little and thin,  
I remember,  
You're worth ten.

Quarter, quarter  
Big and bold,  
You're worth twenty-five  
I am told!

## Wish List

Below is a wish list of items needed for the classroom. If you are interested or able to donate items, it would be most appreciated. Anything on this list can be ordered in smaller parts. For example, if you are able to purchase a chalk board or two, that would be great! Here are some items we are looking for:

- Shark VX3 Sweeper
- CD/Cassette Listening Center with six headphones (headphones are like the old ones that cover the whole ear)

- 30 Mats for Wood Pieces for Handwriting Without Tears
- A new or gently used TV with a remote to replace the one in our classroom. Our TV is over 12 years old and the speakers are very tired. 😊

\*\*Items for the Handwriting Without Tears can be found at [www.HWTears.com](http://www.HWTears.com)\*\*

## This Week, Kindergarten...

- We continued on our morning routine, which includes prayers, calendar, weather, counting to 100 forward and backward from 50, reviewing the alphabet using the letter, word example and sound. We continue to identify the months of the year and days of the week. We continue watching, singing, and moving to music videos for counting. We are using tally marks to tally up the number of days we have been in school.
- Reviewed all of the letters we've learned so far (Mm, Ll, Ff, Nn, Oo, Aa, Gg, Hh, Tt, Pp, Ii, Ss, Rr, Ff, Kk, Bb, Uu, Zz, Cc), working on the letter Ee, blending and unblending words, identifying the number of syllables in words, identifying consonants, vowels, compound words, blending consonants, learning root words (say hammer without the 'er'), identifying the number of words in a sentence and the number of sounds in a word, identifying short vowels and our rule, "If a vowel is followed by a consonant, it is short. Mark it with a breve." We reviewed our twin consonant rule, "When there is a twin consonant, cross out the second one." We reviewed our Kk/Cc rule, "If the /k/ sound is followed by an e, i, or y, use a Kk. If the /k/ sound is followed by an a, o, u, or another consonant, use a Cc." We have been reviewing sight words your children have been reading at home to you one-on-one.
- In Math, we continue our work on Chapter 5. We reviewed numbers 17 through 31, compared numbers using greater than, less than, and equal to concepts, and began filling in missing numbers using before, between, and after concepts. We are learning rules to identify teens, twenties, and thirties. Each is two numbers, the first number identifies what type of number it is and the second identifies which of the teens, twenties or thirties it is. Please continue to work with your student on counting and identifying numbers to 30 and beyond.
- Reviewed basic coin identification of the penny, nickel, dime, and quarter. We discussed what was on each coin, identifying the presidents by name and number, and the value of each coin.
- In Religion, we began discussing Lent, what it is, and why we do it.
- We began new centers this week. Reading Groups, Coin Identification using Heads/Tails, Memory Matching Game, Leap Pad Listening, Number Measuring Game using dice to add unifix cubes together until it reached 1 yard, Seeing Sight Words in the room and writing them down using magic wands and masks. The children love centers!
- Ask your child about the "Snowman Soup" we made in class!

## Special Projects

### Celebrating Our Diversity

As we move into the New Year, we wish to celebrate our diversity by having family and friends come to present information about their culture and heritage. We would like to have one to two speakers a month who come in to share information about where they are from (if you are from outside the United States) or their heritage (e.g. Polish), as well as their culture (e.g. dress, food, activities, music, housing). The presentation, including snack, should be no more than 45 minutes. By celebrating what is special about all of the people in the world, we can learn to better appreciate one another. If you or another family member is available to come in to present to Kindergarten, please let us know so we can start scheduling these wonderful opportunities for learning.

We would like to thank Mrs. Alorro and Mrs. Alorro's cousin, Mrs. Uson, for a wonderful presentation on the Philippines. The children greatly enjoyed learning all about the culture and trying some of their yummy foods.

**Parents, please consider presenting information about your culture (maybe someone is Irish with St. Patrick's Day coming...☺) with the students. It is important for the children to learn to appreciate what is special and unique about all of us.**



## Lenten Leaves

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Lent is a season not only for giving up something but for doing something more in service of our Lord. In that light, our new bulletin board will feature all of the wonderful deeds and choices your children make. Each child will receive a blank sheet of leaves. When your child does something good, helpful, or otherwise outstanding, write the deed and your child's name on the leaf, date it, and send it back. We will read these leaves out in class and then put them on our tree. By the end of Lent, we should have a beautiful tree full of the wonderful choices and actions of all of the children.

"They are like trees growing beside a stream, trees with roots that reach down to the water and have leaves that are always green."

~Jeremiah 17:7

## Gingerbread Man Sightings

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**The Gingerbread Boys and Girls came home and we ate them all up!** As your student may have told you, they came back via UPS and they tasted yummy. Thank you to all of the parents, family, and friends who made this such a special project.

## Feeding Families

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As part of our 100<sup>th</sup> day of school activities, we are trying to collect enough cans to feed 100 or more families. We would like the children to try to collect 100 or more cans of food by February 4, which is the day we plan to celebrate our 100 days of school. All food collections will be marked and stored in the classroom until they are donated so the children can see their success and contribution to feeding the hungry. Please send cans of food in with your children.

## Upcoming Events

- February 19 PTO Skate Night
  - February 23 Stafford Chick-Fil-A Spirit Night
  - February 26 Homework Packets due
  - March 4 Spring Picture Day
  - March 12 11:30 Dismissal
- March 16-19 Design for Excellence Week
  - March 19 11:30 Dismissal
  - April 2 – 11 Easter Vacation
  - May 1 PTO Goods and Services Auction



## General Information

### Pennies for Peru

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We have begun the next collection cycle for the spring, so please continue to send in those pennies, nickels, dimes, quarters, and yes, we've even had dollars. Let's make sure Kindergarten has a jar full of pennies to share with our sister parish in Peru.

### Box Tops and Campbell's Soup Labels

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The race is on for the next box tops prize. Kindergarten won the ice cream party but can they shut out the rest of the classrooms to take the final prize of the year? We know we can so keep sending in those box tops!