



**January Newsletter**  
**Volume 2011-2012, Issue 5**



Our Open House was so successful with all children enrolled and two on the waiting list. Thank you very much for encouraging your friends to consider Northern Cross for their child's preschool!

For the second year, Linda and Beth have achieved the highest credential from the Maryland State Department of Education – Level 6. In order to realize this accomplishment, they were required to complete twice as many clock hours of training (24 hours) and complete 5 professional activity units as well as navigate mounds of government paperwork! I have been informed that this level of credentialing is rare in the preschools of Washington County; in fact I am not aware of any other teachers with this level. I appreciate that Linda has worked so diligently to earn this award.

We have contracted with LANCO, the turf company that works with our church, to work on the mud issue in our playground. He feels that the maple tree's roots and the abundance of fall leaves that remained too long on the ground have contributed to the lack of grass growth. He is going to put down straw for the time being and hopes to lay sod in the spring. It will be costly, but we don't want to relegate the children to one half of the play area.

**FEBRUARY SCHEDULE:**

Monday, January 30 – Vision screening at preschool, need permission slip

Thursday, February 2 – Tuition due, Groundhog Day!

Tuesday, February 14 – Valentine's Day celebration, *children should bring 48 valentines*

Monday, February 20 – No school, Presidents' Day

Tuesday, February 21 – Visit from Otto the Auto, an AAA electric car teaching bike/car safety

Tuesday, February 28 – Fire Safety at preschool, visit by firefighters led by Zach Thomas, Emma's dad!



### Circle Time! (Linda's circle time for three year olds)

This month, we've been learning about what the animals do in the winter. We began by singing our resident stuffed bear (Fuzzy Bear) a good night song and tucking him into his cave for a long winter's sleep. We've been practicing saying the word 'hibernate' and learning it's meaning. We continue to hear a story every morning and have fun singing and dancing to new songs. We've also learned to keep a beat by keeping time to songs with our rhythm sticks! We have started learning our numerals 0 - 10. We have begun a fun new feature as I now have a 'teacher's helper' each morning. This child helps me put the name cards out every morning and puts our weather sign up during circle time.

Some fingerplays we have learned:

#### FIVE LITTLE SNOWMEN FAT

Five little snowmen fat.  
They each wore a funny hat.  
When the sun came around,  
it melted one down.  
What do you think of that!

#### SNOWY HILL

Here's s hill all covered with snow.  
Take out your sled,  
And ZOOM down you go!



### Linda's Creative Corner

Mondays (painting day!) The children enjoyed getting back to the easels and letting their creativity flow! We also learned how to use watercolors and paint with small brushes.

Tuesdays (story stretchers) Two of our favorite story stretcher days involved the books Strega Nona and It Looked Like Spilt Milk. Ask you child if they can say Strega Nona's magic spell with you! ("Boil, Boil, pasta pot, make me some pasta good and hot!") After hearing the story of Strega Nona, the children colored pasta and glued the noodles into a design making their own pasta plate. After hearing It Looked Like Spilt Milk, the children were given white paper and scissors to cut out clouds of different shapes. We then used our imagination to decide what the clouds looked like. (It's even more fun to do this outside while looking up at real clouds! Try it next time you are outside with your child!)

Thursdays (creative play) After having celebrated Chinese New Year, and decorating our cartons to take our fortune cookie home in, we had fun playing with rice in the rice table. We also had fun gluing down the confetti we had cut for our new year's celebration onto paper to make a mosaic picture. We also enjoyed some new cars and trains on the train table. This is the day we spend extra time learning how to make friends, how to take turns and how to cooperate



### Miss Nancy's Notebook

**Button the Buttons, Snap the Snaps, Hook the Velcro and Zipper the Zippers.** The children have been working hard to learn how to manipulate buttons, snaps, Velcro and most importantly zippers by using self-helps in the class room. They are doing very well for the most part; however, some still need encouragement from home. If you hear your child say they have homework, I have asked them to work on zippering their own coat or jacket.



Stuff an arm into each sleeve,  
Put on you coat before you leave.  
Zip the zipper right to the top,  
And cover your head whenever rain drops.

To the parents who have provided a special treat for the children, “Thank You for you Kindness!” **Miss Nancy**



### Team Green

It's was great to see all the kids back from winter vacation! I have been getting the kids moving a lot this month since our outdoor time has been limited. One of our exercise days consisted of pretending to ice skate by putting pieces of wax paper beneath our feet and throwing pretend snowballs (Styrofoam balls)! I think all the kids had a great time. For the Chinese New Year, we did some jump rope and ribbon dancing. Prop boxes this month included construction and the pet/vet box. The kids really enjoyed taking care of the stuffed animals! I am really enjoying watching your children grow and develop and I look forward to more fun in the coming months.

Miss Karen





### Miss Debby's Science and Social Studies

The Orange Room has been very busy this month. The first week of January we performed a science experiment where the students were presented with the experiment, and asked to guess the outcome. We looked at our handmade thermometer and discussed that "water will freeze at 32 degrees." We poured water into Ziploc bags and placed one bag inside and the other bag outside the window. Two days later, the water inside was still liquid but the water outside had turned into ice. We played with the ice and watched as it turned back into water. We checked the temperature every day on [weather.com](http://weather.com) and discussed whether it was colder or warmer (above or below) 32 degrees. On a foggy morning we observed the fog and looked at photos of fog and discussed how fog is caused by a cold blanket of air on top of a warmer blanket of air. We reviewed aspects of the calendar including the year, month, date and day of the week. The next science experiment dealt with wind. All students were asked to guess what objects they could blow and which object they couldn't. They blew through straws at the objects to see if their guesses were correct. Our next exercise was to take a scarf and try to keep rhythm with a variety of beats of music which was played. During Chinese New Year we learned how the 12 years of the Zodiac came about. Buddha invited all animals to a feast and only 12 animals showed up. We learned each animal's name, the sound it made and what it ate. Each animal was honored by having a year to represent every 12 years of the Chinese Zodiac. We also have read books regarding manners and feelings. We are having a great time!





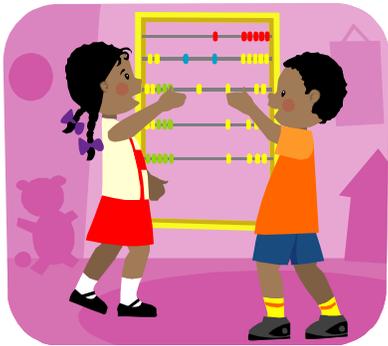
### Miss Beth's Circle Time for Four Year Olds!

In circle time, we have enjoyed learning how some letters work together to make a sound; specifically sh, th, and ch. We practiced writing them on our boards with much success. I am proud of the way the children strive to write the letters correctly, finally showing their best to us in a group "Showtime"!

We also discussed the season of winter with some of my favorite books Thomas' Snowsuit (hilarious!), Frederick, Froggie Gets Dressed, The Hat and The Mitten.

Naturally, I love to celebrate/dress up for all holidays, so the Chinese New Year celebration brought fun with a Chinese stick dance Show Ha Mo and the book Tikki Tikki Tembo during circle time. We followed with a preschool-wide parade complete with firecrackers (bubble wrap stomped upon), animal masks of the zodiac, noise makers, streamers and dragon and lion dancers. Every child had a turn to do everything so it was quite a long parade!

Gung Hay Fat Choy!



### Mathematical Marvels

We had many and varied activities for the four weeks of January beginning with the Happy New Year countdown. To work on the concept of one-to-one correspondence, each child learned the fingerplay of "Ten Little Children Jumping on the Bed" and chose 10 blankies and 10 "baby rocks" to practice putting one rock on one blanket. Then we practiced counting backwards so we could have our Happy New Year countdown!

The next week we studied the concepts of time – before/after, morning/afternoon/evening, earlier/now/later. They actually learned to tell time by the hour on individual miniature analog clocks. All the children could keep the minute hand on the 12 and put the hour hand on a number and tell time. It was amazing!

The following week we brought out many manipulatives that encourage the use of math concepts and we also incorporated puzzles. The children play work on the math toys cooperatively very nicely.

Of course, the last week our recipe was fried rice with every child breaking an egg in half (what a mess!), whipping it and stirring it in the wok with cooked rice, peas, and soy sauce. It was the best eaten school-made snack!