

# Blue Spruce Montessori News

*News from the Classroom  
Upcoming Events  
Vancouver 2010 Olympics  
Skating/Registration/Open Houses*

**JANUARY 2010**



## WINTER NEWS

### News from the classroom

We welcome back all the children and their families and we hope you had a relaxing winter break. We hope you had a wonderful time at the Christmas parties and enjoyed yourselves as much as we did. We would like to wish you all a very happy and healthy new year and look forward to working with your wonderful children once again.

The children have returned to school with energy and enthusiasm and are eager to learn new concepts and work with new materials.

We are working on the longer, more advance materials in the Practical Life area. In the first term the 3 year old children were doing simple one step activities, now they are learning activities with several sequential steps. They are doing well and you can see the confidence and control of movements growing in them. The older children are learning activities with many steps like washing a table, taking care of a plant, flower arranging and many more. The children are thoroughly enjoying this and take pride in maintaining the classroom.

In the sensorial area we continue to work with shapes, colours, size and texture. The children are learning how colours have different shades, how different textures feel how to discriminate between different sizes and many names of two dimension shapes like quatrefoil, curvilinear triangle, trapezoid and more. Many of the older children are learning the names for three dimensional shapes like sphere, cone, cube, pyramid, rectangular prism, cylinder etc. They are having a lot of fun working in small groups and learning new three dimensional shape names on a regular basis.

The younger children are practicing hard with the sandpaper letters and love to think of words beginning with specific sounds. Try playing the "I Spy" game at home with them and see what words your children can think of that start with a specific sound.

In math, children are working on numbers, practicing on a daily basis and writing the symbols on chalk boards. They are learning the decimal system 1, 10, 100, and 100, linear counting and the older children are doing the operations of addition and subtraction.

In the coming months the extended day children are going to learn about provinces and territories of Canada and some distinctly Canadian animals like the beaver and Canadian geese. We will be reviewing oceans of the world and be learning about amphibians and animal behavior during the winter (hibernation, migration, adaptation).

Mrs. Whitley & Mrs. Muqtader

## **Vancouver 2010**

The Olympic Games will be here before we know it and we are aiming to make it a great learning experience for the children. We have made some cards with all the different winter sports on them and we have been talking about and tracking the journey of the Olympic torch. Once the Olympics begin we will keep a medal chart and track Team Canada's victories.

If any of you were lucky enough to get tickets to events then we look forward to hearing about your exciting experience. I have friends attending the open ceremonies and Miss Whitley will attend an ice skating event. Be sure to check out all the free events happening in town and try and take the children ice skating at Robson square.

## **New Students**

We would like to welcome Amna Qureshi to our morning class, and Anayka's brother, Imaan Atwal and Taren Sandhu to the afternoon class. Everyone is settling in very nicely and making lots of new friends.

## **Snack/Laundry/Flowers Sign up**

Thank you once again everyone for your contributions to snack & flowers & for helping with the laundry. We appreciate the effort you all make to bring healthy snacks and beautiful flowers for the children to arrange. We also appreciate you helping to clean the cloths so we can keep extra garbage bags out of the landfill each year.

## **Christmas Richmond Fund – Sponsor Family**

During the holidays we delivered lots of Christmas goodies to the "Williams" family. We donated \$200 in Canadian superstore gift cards, London Drug gift cards for mum along with chocolates and bath products. The children each received several gifts, including a Baby Alive doll, art supplies, Barbie clothes, a wiggles CD, and a lamp for baby's room, baby clothes, duplo blocks, cuddly toys and more. The family was very thankful and the mum gave Blue Spruce a piece of her native art, which we will display in the classroom for all to enjoy. Thank you all for making a difference to a family in our community this holiday season.

## **New Classroom Materials**

We have purchased some new materials for the classroom with the funds we raised at the silent auction: a new map of Canada and a control map (on order), a Lee Valley tumbling compost so we can make our own compost from the snack scraps, new geometric solids, (on order) various cards for language and culture (on order).

## **Professional Day**

A reminder that school will be closed Monday, February 1st. Miss Whitley and Mrs. Muqtader will be attending an AMI Montessori refresher course at the Montessori Training Center of BC and Miss Crowe will be observing other Montessori schools and lesson planning.

## **Valentines Skating**

Friday February 12<sup>th</sup> we are booked into the Richmond Ice Rink for an hour of skating. The Rink is booked from 10:45 a.m. until 11:45 a.m. for morning and extended day children and 1:45 – 2:45 p.m. for the afternoon children. Classes will finish earlier both in the morning and afternoon. Please mark this on your calendar; letters with more details will be handed out at the end of the month.

## **Valentine Cards**

If children would like to exchange Valentine cards with their friends at school we are asking for your help to make it easier to sort them. Please arrange cards for am/pm/ex day children and put an elastic band around each separately with a label for which group. If possible please sort cards in alphabetical order by the child's surname.

If your child will give cards to all the children in the class then please just have your child sign his/her name instead of naming all the cards individually.

If you can have all cards at school no later than Wednesday February 10<sup>th</sup> this will give us time to sort all the cards and have them in bags for the children, to be handed out on Friday Feb. 10<sup>th</sup>. I will send everyone an updated class list.

## **“Gung Hay Fat Choy”**

Chinese New Year falls on the same day as Valentines Day, February 14th, and this year is the year of the Tiger. Miss Whitley will prepare some items on the observation table for the children to enjoy.

## **Re-registration**

September 2010/11 registration for families currently attending Blue Spruce will take place during the week of February 8<sup>th</sup> through until February 15<sup>th</sup>. Morning, afternoon and extended day spaces can be secured on a first return basis.

Registration packages will be handed out at the beginning of February.

## **Open Houses**

**THURSDAY FEBRUARY 12<sup>th</sup>, 4:30 P.M. – 6:00 P.M.**

**TUESDAY FEBRUARY 16<sup>TH</sup>, 4:30 P.M. – 6:00 P.M.**

We will be holding two public open houses for September 2010/11 registration, please inform friends whom may be interested in enrolling their child/ren for September of these dates, we would love to meet them and discuss with them how Blue spruce can meet the educational and developmental needs of their child/ren. We are currently taking applications for the upcoming school year and booking classroom observations.

## **Tax Receipts**

Tuition receipts for the 2009 school year will be handed out by the end of February.

## **Late Arrivals**

We really appreciate the effort everyone is making to arrive at school on time. Just a reminder: that after 9:00 a.m./1:15 p.m. students will not be admitted into the classroom. If you have a legitimate reason for arriving late please notify us by telephone, we will be empathetic and accommodating. It is very difficult for everyone when there is a constant stream of late children, especially your child who misses out on connecting with other children as they arrive.

We look forward to everyone arriving on time and having a great term.

## **March Break**

School will close on March 12<sup>th</sup> for a two week spring break. School will reopen on Monday March 29<sup>th</sup>.

## Family Evening

Thursday, March 11<sup>th</sup> we will hold a family evening for children to invite their families into their classroom and share with them some of the activities they have learned and skills they have mastered. Invites will go out closer to the time.

## Math in the Montessori Environment

Math in the Montessori classroom can be roughly divided into three main areas: preliminary math, the decimal system and the operations.

Children are exposed to math at roughly the age of 3 and a half when they learn the concept of numbers 1 – 10. They do this by learning to count first the quantities of 1 – 10 through the use of our number rods. They then learn the symbols for these numbers. When the children understand both the quantity and the symbol, they work with a number of activities that help them to associate the two.

In the decimal system, the children learn all the quantities of the decimal system from units to thousands, and eventually all the way up to one million. They then learn the symbols for these quantities. Much concrete practice is done to associate both the symbol and quantity. At this stage, the children also learn the teens, tens and how to form complex numbers into the thousands.

The operations are introduced in a highly concrete way, with the use of beaded material that is physically added together, subtracted, or whatever the operation calls for. They are then worked with in increasing abstract ways as the children learn to memorize the tables.

Miss Whitley

### Books / Finger plays / Poems

Miss Crowe has provided once again a list of books and poems and finger plays that she will be teaching the children this month so that you can join in and know what your children are singing when they come home. Thanks Miss Crowe!

### BOOKS WE ARE READING:

- Roosters off to see the world- Eric Carle
- Animal Homes- Usbourne
- Cold Little Duck Duck-Lisa Peters
- If you see a kitten- John Butler
- Up on Daddy's Shoulders-Matt Berry
- Lost-David McPhail
- Time for Bed- Mem Fox
- Baby Bear Baby Bear, What do you see?  
Bill Martin, and Eric Carle
- Mrs. McNosh Hangs up her Wash- Sarah Welles
- Beetle Bop- Denise Fleming

\* various sound books

### Our Poems

I am glad the sky is painted  
blue...

I'm glad the sky is painted blue  
And the Earth is painted green  
With such a lot of nice fresh Air  
All sandwiched in between

Mrs Moon

Mrs Moon  
sitting in the sky  
little old lady  
rock-a-bye  
with a ball of fading light and  
silver kneedles  
knitting the night

\* The Usbourne book of Poems  
for young children

## Finger Plays:

This is how my goldfish swims  
and birdies fly like this  
Spiders Crawl right up the wall,  
And elephants walk like this.

Zoom Zoom Zoom  
we are going to the moon  
zoom zoom zoom  
we will get there very soon  
If you want to take a trip  
climb aboard my rocket ship  
5, 4, 3, 2, 1 BLAST OFF!

These are grandmothers glasses  
And this is grandmothers cap  
And this is the way she folds her  
hands  
and puts them in her lap

Stand up high  
spread your arms wide  
fly like birdies fly

bend down low  
touch your toes  
waddle like the old duck goes

Slippery Fish  
Slippery Fish  
Swimming the water  
slippery fish slipperfy fish  
gulp gulp gulp  
"Oh no, he's been eaten by\_\_\_\_\_"

open shut them  
open shut them  
IAY THEM IN YOUR LAP  
ROLL THEM  
ROLL THEM  
just like this  
wave them  
wave them  
and blow a little kiss

*From all the Staff at Blue Spruce Montessori*