



Dartmouth College Child Care Center Newsletter

January/February 2012

In This Issue:

From the Director

pg. 1

Sunnie Greetings

pg. 4

Announcements

pg. 5

Resources for

Families pg. 6

Recent Events

pg. 8

Floats

pg. 9

Teddy One pg. 10

Teddy Too pg. 12

Panda

pg. 14

Koala

pg. 16

Woolly

pg. 18

Polar

pg. 21

Grizzly

pg. 22

Office: Jeff Robbins,
Sunnie McPhetres,
Terry Chase, Amy
Potter

From the Director

Summer and Fall Enrollment

Happy New Year! With my holiday decorations finally put away I'm embracing the winter and hoping for plenty of snow. This is also the time of year when I begin to think of summer and fall enrollment at DCCCC. I'll begin the process in March by sending you a survey asking for your summer and fall schedule requests. (Note: I have already asked Grizzlies for this information. It is due in the office by Friday, January 27.) Once I have a better idea of the fall census, I'll begin planning group composition for the fall. The age ranges of each group vary from year to year, so stay tuned for the coming year.

Of course, any time you need a change of schedule, let me know. Absences of 4 consecutive weeks or more may be arranged in the summer (only) for a holding fee of 50% of tuition. Remember that I need a 30 day notice if you plan to withdraw or reduce the number of days that your child attends. Actually, as much notice as you can give is helpful.

If you have questions about the process, please ask your child's teacher, Sunnie or me.

DCCCC closes at 5:30

By working together to help everyone transition to home at the end of the day, DCCCC really is closing at 5:30. Hooray for everyone!



Dear Big Jeff,

I remember that you wrote a newsletter a few months ago about teaching our children to stay with us at pick-up time and not to run ahead. I even found it on-line on the DCCCC webpage – it was from September 2011. Recently my Grizzly asked me a question that I wasn't sure how to answer. She asked, "Who's the boss of me at pick-up time?" I jokingly said, "I'm ALWAYS the boss of you" but then I wondered who IS the boss of pick-up time. What's the answer?

Signed,

The Boss (I think)

Dear Boss,

Transitions are unsettling for children and it certainly is a hectic time of day when everyone's resources of energy and good humor may be depleted.

If your child were to ask me "Who's the boss at pick-up time?", I might say, "That's an interesting question. What do you think?" That would help me be clear what the child wanted to know. However, taking this question at face value I might say, "When you are five, there is always an adult to keep an eye on you and to help when you need it. When you are at school, your teachers are in charge. When you are at home, your mother/father/other and I are responsible for you. It can be confusing when teachers and parents are both there. When I arrive to pick you up, I'm in charge of you, but the teacher helps. We both help you remember the rules." A shorter version might be, "Both your teacher and I are. You already know the rules, like always stay with me, so you don't actually need much help."

Reminder: always sign your child in and out so we have an incontrovertible record of attendance. Sign out when you actually leave, not when you arrive. Include the time along with your name. This is actually a state licensing rule.

Cooperatively,

Big Jeff

Dear Big Jeff,

I'd like to know more about what my child does during the day. She's not a very good source of information. A typical conversation goes like this:

"How was your day?"

"Fine."

"What did you do?"

"Played."

Signed,

In the Dark

Dear Dark,

One thing you can do is to refine your questions. I can see that you've already learned not to ask Yes-or-No questions which tend to get Yes or No answers! Try narrowing the scope of the question down a bit. You might ask:

"What book did you read today?"

Or, "What did you have for snack?"

Or, "When you went outside, what did you do?"

Asking the teachers is more likely to get specific information, but not if it's very late in the afternoon and we are all rushing to leave by 5:30. If the timing is such that we consistently don't have time to chat, please call or e-mail or set up an informal meeting. In this case, if you want the big picture ask "How's it going?" but if you are wondering about something particular, ask a specific question like "Which children are her favorite play-mates?" or "How does she handle conflict?" We really do want you to be in the loop! Each classroom has their own means of communicating what has transpired and what is planned. Check with your child's teachers to locate documents like nap charts, diaper charts, snack menus, lesson plans, communicable disease reports and What We Did Today reports. Watch, too, for periodic postings of photographs, children's work on display and e-mail updates. Parent conferences are held twice a year, typically fall and spring. Sunnie and I are also available for questions, comments and concerns. Just ask. Really.

Informatively,

Big Jeff

Greetings From Sunnie:

It's a new year and wonderful things are happening at DCCCC!! One of the nice things about my position is that I get to move throughout the building, frequently! I get to look at life at DCCCC in ways that I could not as a teacher assigned to one class. As I walk around the center I look at all of the wonderful displays that surround us! A trip down the hall to the Panda and Teddy Rooms shows amazing artwork from all groups along with photos!!!

What fun for the kids to see their work and face every time that they come to childcare, go home, go to the big multi or on an errand with a teacher!

I have to actually venture into the classrooms in the preschool wing to see what's going on in there! The Woolly Room is out of this world!!! They have truly gone into space. Their work is everywhere. The Polars seem to be celebrating the Lunar New Year in the Arctic. It's so chilly in the Polar Room that they have an igloo and there are penguins and New Year decorations everywhere! The Koalas have a blend of transportation and space art! They have many stop signs to follow to get to the planets! The Grizzly hallway has some amazing paintings. I can stand and stare at them for a very long time and see something different each time.

Looking at all of these amazing displays tells me that not only do we have wonderfully creative kids and teachers, but that development can be seen in so many ways. Just looking at these displays I can see the range of development from the Teddies exploring water colors, to the more directed art work of the Grizzlies! Take the time some time to ask your child's teacher about all the learning that is going on during art activities!

Have a Great Month!

Sunnie



ANNOUNCEMENTS



DCCCC Will Be Closed On The Following Days:

- March 19, 2011 – In-service
Training Day**
- May 26, 2011 – Memorial Day**
- July 4, 2011 – Independence Day**

Snow Days

Whenever Hanover schools close or open late due to inclement weather, DCCCC will have a late opening time of 9:00 a.m. A late opening at DCCCC will be announced on:

- WMUR TV Channel 9 and www.WMUR.com
- WCAX TV Channel 3 and www.WCAX.com, (go to weather, select school closings)
- New Hampshire Public Radio web site: www.nhpr.org

During school vacations, late openings will be decided by the Director in consultation with local authorities and will be announced in the same media as above.

Grizzlies may arrive at 9 a.m. too and pay the full day rate.

Happy New Year and 2012. Below are the dates for the upcoming working mom's lunches so make sure you mark your calendars. For those that set resolutions or at least think about it, may I suggest a resolution of spending some time getting to meet some more working mom's on campus? This group is a great way to do that! I know I have met several new friends through this group and it's always nice to see a more familiar face at a meeting, day care pick-up, or a kid's basketball game. So, come join us for lunch if you can!

Thursday, February 16

Monday, March 12

Wednesday, April 11

All lunches will take place at 12:00 at Ramunto's in Hanover.

A little background on the group for those who are new: We are very casual group that gets together once a month for lunch to talk about whatever is on our minds. We all know how challenging it is to balance a career and a family and it's really nice to have others to talk with and get ideas or just vent. We discuss all types of things ranging from pregnancy, potty training, child care options, bedtime routines, food, etc. Any topic is open for discussion and people have been so helpful in offering advice and assistance when needed. Mom's in the group have all age ranges of kids and everyone is welcome. Typically we have anywhere from 5-12 women at each lunch. It would be great to have more so I hope to see some new people and the return of some who haven't been in a while. Mark your calendars now and try to join us!

If you have any questions or know people that would like to be added to the e-mail list, please feel free to e-mail me!

Megan Sobel
Senior Associate Athletic Director
Dartmouth College
603-646-1427

Resources for Families

Friday, February 3, Opening Art Reception in Newport: 5 to 7 p.m., Library Arts Center, 58 Main St., behind the Richards Free Library. Exhibit features artwork from six winners of the Library Art Center's 2011 juried regional exhibit. Free. Exhibit continues through March 16. 603-863-3040.

Fridays:

Astronomical Observing in Hanover: 8 to 10 p.m., Shattuck Observatory, Dartmouth College, Observatory Road off Wheelock Street. Weather permitting, the departments of physics and astronomy offer public viewing through campus telescope. Free. 603-646-9100.

Saturday, February 4, **Open House for Upper Valley Waldorf School in Quechee:** 9 to 11 a.m., 80 Bluff Road. Open house for parents of prospective nursery school and kindergarten students. Free. 802-296-2496.

Saturday, February 4, **Enfield Shaker Museum in Enfield:** 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., 447 Route 4A. Museum offers tours of the Great Stone Dwelling, trails for snowshoeing and a gift shop. Open noon to 4 p.m. on Sunday. \$4 to \$8.50. 603-632-4346.

Saturday, February 4, **Upper Valley Chocolate Tasting in Norwich:** 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., Tracy Hall, 300 Main St. Local chocolatiers and chocolate artisans offer samples and compete for the People's Choice Award for Best Chocolate Dessert in the Upper Valley. ^ \$10. 802-649-2624.

Saturday, February 4, **Live Bird Programs at VINS in Quechee:** "Talk to the Trainer," 11 a.m. and "Through the Eyes of a Raptor," 2 p.m. Exhibits and trails open 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. daily. \$9 and \$11; under 3 free. Vermont Institute of Natural Science, off Route 4. 802-359-5000 or info@vinsweb.org.

Saturday, February 4, **Cabin Fever Festival in Orford:** 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., Congregational Church, Main Street. Festivities include a pancake breakfast, 7:30 to 9 a.m., wagon rides, 9 to 11 a.m. \$5, craft fair, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., flower arranging demonstration, 10:30 a.m., lunch, 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m., puppet show, 1 p.m., and tea tasting, 3 to 4 p.m. Donations accepted. 603-353-4634.

Saturday, February 4, **Tiki Torch Trek in Hartland:** 5 to 8 p.m., Recreation Center, Route 12, Hartland Three Corners. Ski, snowshoe or walk a 3K trail lighted by torches

and lanterns. \$9 per person, \$25 for families, under 12 free. Proceeds benefit Hartland Winter Trails. 802-785-2129.

Saturday February 4, 2012, **Howl at the Moon.** The Dartmouth Cross Country Ski Center brings you the 6th Annual “Howl at the Moon”. A progressive dinner out on the golf course lit by torches and fire pits and catered by our local merchants. Fun for all and a limited number of tickets sold. Please purchase tickets (\$10/person; free for ages 5 and under) at the Dartmouth Cross Country Ski Center at the DOC House on Occom Pond. EBA's, Ramutos, Lou's, Market Table, Cupcake Queens, Boloco and more. Great live music in the DOC House

Sunday, February 5, **Origami for Beginners in Woodstock:** 10 a.m. to noon, ArtisTree Gallery, Mount Tom Building, 1207 Route 12. Parents and children learn origami that has a Valentine's Day theme. \$30 or \$45 per parent/child pair. 802-457-3500 or artistreetvt.org.

Sunday, February 5, **Drumming and Dancing in South Strafford:** 6 to 8 p.m., Barrett Hall, 248 Route 132. Open drum and dance circle for all ages and abilities. Bring an instrument if you can. Donations accepted. 802-765-4059.

Saturday February 11, 2012, **Occom Pond Party** — 12 noon to 3 pm
Games, food, music, and sleigh ride. Lots of fun. Do not miss this wonderful winter bash!

Friday, February 17- Sunday, February 19, **The Vermont Flurry, Woodstock Snow Sculpture Festival.** A celebration of winter and the visual arts! Cheer on professional snow sculpting teams as they create large, stunning sculptures on the Village Green, and be amazed as these works of art come to life over a three-day period. You can even vote for your favorite “Peoples’ Choice” pick, to be announced on the last day! Feeling creative yourself? You and your family can sculpt your own snow creations, using "mini" snow blocks nearby. The atmosphere is completed with toasty warming fires and tasty refreshments provided by local organizations.

Saturday, February 25, 11:00 am. [HopStop: Dartmouth Dance Theater Ensemble—How Are Dances Made?](#) HopStop Family Series: Discover the creative and choreographic process of making contemporary dances in this interactive performance.

Sunday February 26, 2012, **Story Time and Marshmallow Roast** — 11 am to 12 noon
Stories will be read to children ages 3-8 accompanied by their parents, by the fireplace in the main room of the Dartmouth Outing Club House. Roast marshmallows by the campfire, Skating - XC Skiing - Sledding / weather permitting

Recent Events at DCCCC



News from the Float Team

Eileen Ruml

Gladness Msumanje

Elizabeth Harrington

Miranda Arruda

April Buchanan

What the Team Has Been Up To!

Eileen is back to her regular three day a week schedule! She has been helping the Woollies keep up with their worm composting!

April has become reacquainted with all of the classrooms and has greatly enjoyed it! She will be covering the Panda Room for a time while Susan continues to recuperate.

Gladness is spending her time with the Koalas for a while. She is having such fun being like a two year old again!

Elizabeth is here, there and everywhere! She has spent a great deal of time with the Woollies and has become their great friend!

Miranda gets around a bit as well, but has been sharing lots of hugs and time with the Teddies and Teddies Too!

News from Teddy One

Debbie Burnham,
Lead Teacher

Wendy Irwin,
Teacher

Michele Murphy,
Assistant Teacher

Recently I began to see true friendships forming in Teddy One. When I took a closer look I noticed that signs of social interactions were everywhere!

Madelyn will sit up and watch all that is going on in the classroom. She smiles as a toddler comes close to her. Grace watches and points to her peers. Last week Cleo was mimicking what Grace was doing as they smiled at each other. Emily and Cleo were playing a peek a boo game and then reached out to hold hands. Unfortunately we did not get to the camera in time for a photo.

Dara goes to the wall of family photos and points to her classmates while Kellyn can say some of her friend's names. It is evident they are glad to be here when they arrive in the mornings.

Remi notices a group of children gathered in one area and goes over to join in. He gives sweet pats to his friends.

Carter, Owen, Yirang and Kirsten are a close group. They look for each other and will say each other's names. They will even ask when one is not here, saying their name questioningly. These four often go off to the area by the diaper table and have their own circle time. One will lead the others in a song or clapping.

Research used to say that young children do parallel play, but do not interact. Newer studies show infants as young as six months engage in social interactions with other infants (Phyllis Porter, M.A.).

At the start of the school year we encourage social interactions by singing and talking about each child. We sing, "Where, Oh Where is My Friend (name)?" and "Two Little Birds Sat on a Hill", substituting each child's name in the song. In just a short time the children bond as a group.





We enjoy seeing the closeness the Teddies share with each other. It truly is magical to see each child develop and grow as an individual and as part of a group. As the song goes, "The more we get together, the happier we'll be"!

Two reminders:

Please check the extra clothing in the kitchen area cubbies for sizing. Also check each day to see if any bagged soiled clothing await you there.

Please cut grapes and other foods that pose a choking hazard. Children under three cannot have raisins, raw carrots or chips. We do appreciate your help in this matter.

Sincerely,
Debbie, Wendy and Michele

News from Teddy Too

Terri Crane,
Lead Teacher

Lori Higgins,
Teacher

Denise Ayres,
Assistant Teacher

Teddy Too News

The ever changing Teddy room is changing again. These babies just keep growing and changing.

I love when babies become young toddlers and start to use their bodies differently. We have this room full of these ever changing beings. Over the winter break several Teddies came back moving, rolling and walking around the Teddy room. They came back chatting and talking about a lot of things too. We will have to wait a little longer to understand some of them, but they are determined to tell us about it. They are more curious about what is happening around them. Where are you going when you leave through this door and if I cry will you take me with you?

Lately, we have had the kitchen set out in Teddy Too, and it has allowed us to see a wide variety of play. We have the babies who are exploring the food and dishes (mostly with their mouths) we also have the young toddlers that love the baskets of food to dump and pull off the shelves. Also they love it when all the food and plates end up in the play sink because that makes really loud noises when you move your hands back and forth in them really fast. Then we have the older toddlers that are starting to get pretend play with feeding babies magic juice bottles, pouring cups of tea, and having plates of pretend food for lunch. It's such a fun time when you can hand them a tea cup and have them pretend to drink it while you pretend to drink it too.

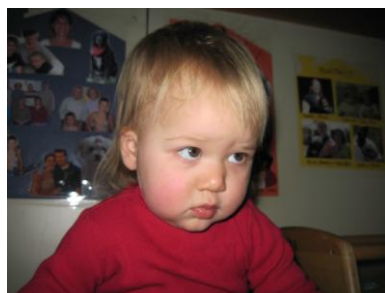
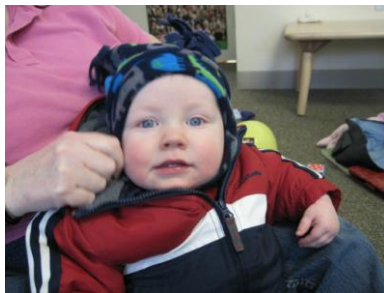
Children learn a lot about the world through imaginative play. We are discovering the fun your child can have with open-ended play time. Having an assortment of props available helps them open their minds to different kinds of playing. While we tend to spend a lot of money on toys and materials it is not necessary to do so. Children are happy with things you might normally recycle such as oatmeal boxes, plastic juice bottles, yogurt cups, empty spice containers, add small light weight pots and pans, utensils and some cups and spoons and you've got yourself a great kitchen set.

We are also finally enjoying some snow. Well some are still getting used to this cold wet stuff that's really hard to walk in and really cold to lose your boot in. Some are troopers out there moving around like they were born to be in the snow. They fall down get back up and keep on moving as if it never happened. Then we have the ones who were really meant to be in warmer climates this time of year. They fight you the entire time they are getting dressed and when they get outside it's as if you have asked them to play in Antarctica. When they fall down they lay in the same position they fell in and cry until they are helped back up (probably thinking why on earth would they put me out here on this frozen tundra to play? They couldn't possibly think I am having fun!). Just when they get used to it spring will be here.

We will be saying goodbye to our afternoon helper Anna. She has been a tremendous helper since the fall. We wish her all the best.

Happy New Year!

Terri, Lori and Denise



News from the Panda Bears

Susan Young,
Lead Teacher

Jenn Boudro,
Teacher

Teresa Hahn
Assistant Teacher

It is so hard to believe that we are entering our last week of January. It felt so good to get some snow to cover our playground and experience a little bit of winter. Oh how our Pandas love to be outside. They seem to enjoy the challenge of moving their bodies around in the snow (except for the occasional face plant). Some of them have really enjoyed sledding down the hill in the sleds when our hill allows. We are working hard to practice taking off and putting on our own winter gear. Some are able to get completely dressed and undressed by themselves while others are practicing taking off their shoes, but everyone has been working so hard at this difficult task.

So much has been happening in the Panda room these days. This group has really been into listening to stories. We have started reading more in depth books and their attention span for their age continues to amaze us. Over the last few weeks, children have been

taking turns bringing favorite books from home for us to read. We then do an extension of the activity around the book. We still have a few more to go over the next few weeks. The completed ones appear in the Panda hallway. Some of them included creating bird nests, building a community, a puppet show, a construction site, and this week will even include a veterinarian clinic. Pandas love to stop and look at them and make comments about each activity. We will be continuing over the next few weeks with the extended activities.

Other activities have included:

- *experiments with ice, water, and snow

- *creating snow people, snowflakes, baking snowflake cookies, snow prints, snow tracks etc. Teresa created our “snow pandas” door.

- *celebrating the Lunar New Year with the year of the “dragon”. We had a parade around the center, made necklaces of the animal zodiac sign in which each Panda was born under. Tejas was born in the year of the rat. Sophie, Rowan, Angus, Liam, Maddy, Annabel, Greta, and Katharine were born under the year of the Ox, and Gabriel, Nate and Simon were born in the year of the “tiger”. We had a special picnic snack of dumplings, rice, and very weak decaf tea. We practiced using chopsticks to eat our snack.

- *Toothbrush Day is coming up this week as well.

On Friday, January 27th we said good-bye to our long time afternoon helper turned permanent substitute, Aspen Wilson. She has grown to become a real part of the Panda team and she will be missed. Aspen will be embarking on a new journey of

her life in Denver, Colorado. Aspen has been a dedicated Panda team member for the last five years. It is going to be difficult to imagine the Panda room without Aspen's presence. I'm sure she will keep in touch with us and let us know how things turn out for her. We wish her the best of luck.

Susan will be out for most of the month of February, enduring a second foot surgery this week, and will be recuperating until the end of February. April Buchanan, a member of the float team will be filling in for the middle part of the day until Susan's return.

As always we extend an invitation for any family member to come in and share a song, story, a recipe, or play an instrument for us. No experience necessary!

Until next time,
Jenn for the Panda team



News from the Koalas

Terri Hollis,
Lead Teacher

Bobbie Lynn Stone,
Teacher

Assistant Teacher

Hello Koala Families,

For many weeks and up until very recently the ground was different hues of brown. Now picture if you will, a sudden snow covered ground. The last time your children experienced such a thing they were one and a half to barely two years of age. Needless to say the looks on your children's faces seemed to vary in thought. Whoa, yuck, brrrr, now what, cool. Now that they have become seasoned snow bunnies they have learned many ways to play in the snow. Digging is always a favorite. The hard work of trudging up hill to enjoy the three second ride down is certainly practice in the area of persistence and patience. It is a mighty good thing that eating snow off their dirty mitten is always a thirst quenching option.

Just think of how independent and able your children have become. It is even more amazing to think about just how short a time this huge change has occurred. Some children are putting on their challenging winter clothing. Some are even helping others the best they know how. Now there is a big one not to overlook. They are not just thinking of their own needs but expanding it to making sure friends are okay and taken care of. WOW! Up until now it was appropriately their job to only care that their needs mattered most. It has been wonderful sitting down and chatting with many parents to share in our bragging rights about the Koalas. Well of course we discuss goals and things we are striving for, but don't we all no matter what the age? I always appreciate the time to talk and share what we do in the classroom. It is always a great opportunity to brainstorm ideas as partners to figure out possible solutions for those less than desirable behaviors. Here is telling you something you all know. Your children are growing each and every day. They are amazing!

As a side note and just to let you all know your children have loved Gladness in the classroom. She is young at heart and they feel it. They often can be heard saying "Gladness come play with me." In their eyes she is an equal play partner.

On behalf of the Koala room
Terri Hollis



News from the Woolly Bears

Deb Girdwood,
Lead Teacher

Barb Merchand,
Teacher

Moya Stevens,
Assistant Teacher

Views of Two Studies

Barbs words:

The WB play-based curriculum focuses on children's interests, activities, and interactions with their peers and environment. Recently at multi time the teachers noticed that the Woollies were turning the playground vehicles upside down and "fixing" them with tool props. This interest was transferred to the dramatic play center where they collectively decided to set up a "fix it" shop.

Woollies brainstormed ideas by documenting their knowledge about fixing cars mechanically. They organized their needs: a large box to build the car, materials to make the car parts, borrow the Panda action tools, and pump gas "to make the car go"! Woollies donned their hard hats, seriously collaborated where to put the paper plate steering wheel, tinfoil headlights, engine, horn, off/on switches, and gas tank while constantly hammering, drilling, and sanding the many car parts. As children extended their learning they added an air hose for flat tires, and the ring of the cash register was heard constantly as pay coins regularly changed hands. Each day a new story would unfold as "workers" discussed what was broken, how to fix it, and how it happened!

To promote safety in the work place Brian (previously an auto mechanic major) was invited to be a guest speaker. He identified each tool, it's function, and how to handle it carefully for yourself and others.

The developmentally appropriate activities that supported the emerging curriculum were as follows:

Blocks - Construction: road building 'round the town as children "drove" to the grocery, ice rink, aquatic center (a favorite!), or a friend's house for a playdate--

Literacy - Language: illustrating community maps, creating road and traffic signs, providing library resources about tools, families, and garages etc.-

Music - Movement: With partners in the front and back seats Woollies "drove" 'round the room to the song-"The Wheels on the Car Go 'Round and 'Round"-

Fine Motor Development: Painting the cardboard box, drawing and labeling maps, writing the dreaded speed tickets-

Social Studies: learning about families, identifying street addresses (very important for playdates!), learning about local neighborhoods, transportation near and far-

The WB Fix-it Shop offered a child centered curriculum with developmentally appropriate activities that was based on children's play experiences.

The Woollies will leave earth temporarily as they actively explore the galaxies and beyond. So buckle your seatbelt and join us for the count down... 10...9... 8 BLAST OFF!

Deb's words:

Happy New Year!

We are all very excited to have some fresh white snow to play in! The Woollies have enjoyed playing with each other and other classrooms outside on our playground. We have been sledding, shoveling the snow and ice, building snow forts, and pretending to walk through the huge craters on our playground "moon."

We have blasted off into outer space! Following the children's interests, the Woollies are leaning about the international space station, the moon, stars, and our solar system. The dramatic play area in the room has turned into a command center and we have a space capsule to take trips to the moon! Our reading area has another capsule in, offering a space for quiet reading either alone or with a friend. We turned a wading pool into a moon full of craters. Free choices activities have included counting moon rocks, matching, and recognizing the numeral. Some friends are even enjoying adding numbers together and solving the math problem. We have done a lot of counting backwards from 10 and blasting off!

We had to say good-bye to another Woolly family. Thursday, January 19 was Ben Otto's last day as he and his family returned to Switzerland. We wish Ben, Julian, Boris, and Senta well as they return back home.

We welcome Ramin and his mom, Shakeel, to the Woolly room until Feb 19th. We are happy to have them join us, even though the time will be short. Ramin is a former Panda.

Thanks to those that have taken the time to label all your children's outer wear. We have a lot of boys this year and many of them are wearing BLUE! Everyone seems to be getting the right clothes to the right place now.

We look forward to meeting with you soon, as we will be scheduling your child's conference.

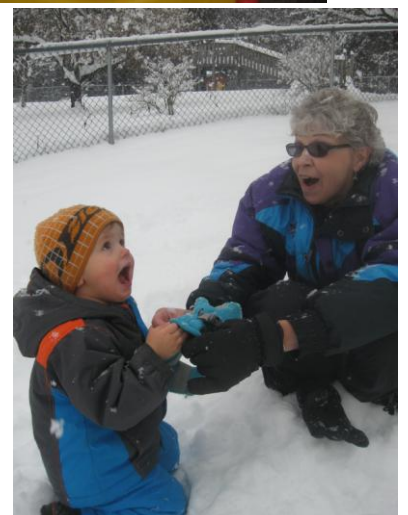
Looking ahead to February:

Tuesday 14 - Valentine's Day (activities and card exchange)

Friday 17- Parent Snack. 7:30 am -9:30 am (ish)

Come have breakfast with your children before going off to work.

The Woolly Team



News from the Polar Bears

Radoyka Garcia,
Lead Teacher

Tatyana Bills,
Teacher

Raquel Fluette,
Assistant Teacher

¡Feliz Año 2012! (*Happy New Year!*)

Hoping everyone has had a restful and enjoyable Holiday...

We finally have seen snow on our playground and we surely have been sledding! Many wintry projects have evolved from playing with ice and snow: inside at our texture table we've added color mixtures to snow, putting them in different size containers and trays in our freezer and watching to see what happens when different colors join together. We have been playing with all of our Arctic Animals and talked about some of their habitats.

Polars have been looking forward to many special events. Once returning from our break, we settled back into our routine, we reviewed some rules of the outdoors and geared up with our winter clothes to go on a Nature Walk around the trails near the center. The weather and the views were spectacular! Children always remember the 'troll bridge' and recite a few lines from "The Three Billy Goats Gruff." They learn to

watch for little outdoor treasures like pine cones, mushrooms, sap on branches, colorful stones, and use all their senses when hearing birds and seeing some tracks in the snow, evidence from the wildlife that live nearby. While the group stayed together, they also had the opportunity to run free in a safe and open area at the meadow near the Dartmouth Rugby Field...later they rolled on their sides, laughing until they reached the bottom of the hill.

As we celebrate the year of the Dragon in 2012, many of our Asian families in our classroom have brought in decorations and information about the Chinese New Year. On January 25, we invited all the Polar families to celebrate with us! The children made Chinese arts and crafts and enjoyed many images of dragons – we are displaying these in our room for the next two weeks; they're beautiful!

We have said our farewells to a Polar Bear that has been with us for a year and we will truly miss: *Julian Otto*. Along with his Woolly brother, Ben and their parents, they have moved back to their home in Switzerland, as they attended DCCCC temporarily. We wish them well! Also leaving, but returning back this summer is *Alice Haxby*. Here new baby sister, Caterina and their parents will be travelling to Italy with Alice's maternal grandmother. By the time you receive the next newsletter, she will already be in Italy...we will miss Alice, but we wish all of the well!

To all Parents: Be careful driving as the weather makes things slippery! We also appreciate that parents are coming in much earlier during pick up time and leaving the building before 5:30 pm...that means teachers are also going home on time (Thank you so much for all your efforts!) Whenever you are in a bind about pick up or it is just too difficult to leave on time, please let us know. We would like to help your departure be a pleasant experience!

Happy Winter!!!!

Ray and the Polar Team

News from the Grizzlies

Karen Gray,
Lead Teacher

Kristin Ball Cole,
Teacher

Happy New Year! The Grizzlies have returned from break with much excitement to see and play with one another again! Winter discussions and activities have begun! By making different types of snowflakes and reading many winter books, we are hoping that more snow is coming our way! With the joy of being outdoors in the winter, we have had serious conversations with the children regarding winter safety (such as dressing appropriately, sledding rules, and caution on ice). We have enjoyed a few days of sledding and began making a fort and hope to venture on over to the big sledding hill soon! The cold weather can limit our outside time on some days but well-layered, warm Grizzlies have gotten out sledding and playing every day so far. To provide more active time in our day, we do our best in the winter to have additional multi days and have been getting down there at least 3 if not 4 times a week.

With another year gone by and these kindergartners growing and learning so much, we have been thinking about our accomplishments and the hard work we have put into learning. With practice, patience, determination and the acceptance of making mistakes, children have been more willing to take risks, try new things, and want to help one another in order to succeed. We are seeing a cooperative and helpful group here. There has been a great amount of collaboration taking place throughout the day. When a group of friends are deciding what to construct with the blocks, legos, magnetiles and K'NEX they are sharing their ideas and making compromises. Children are working out specific roles while pretending and deciding whose turn it is to have a certain stuffy or be the puppy. Grizzlies are helping one another to read and write words, as well as work together to find all of the hidden pictures/words. As children play various games they are having to figure out turn taking and understanding the rules. Individuals are also using their unique styles of creativity to create group inventions made from the array of art materials available.

Learning how to get along together, to listen to, respect and help each other is something we work on each day. As expected, the Grizzlies responded empathetically when they were faced with a dilemma. One day the Grizzlies were told that only certain individuals could participate in special activities in the afternoon (such as only blue-eyed friends could play upstairs, only blonde haired friends could go to the multi, only friends that have lost at least 1 tooth could have a special snack and only friends with dark skin color could do a special project). By using happy and sad faced puppets each individual had to show us how these 4 scenarios made them feel before having the opportunity to explain their feelings and thoughts. We quickly began hearing the group say things such as, "this isn't fair!" "I want to give up one of my special activities so a friend who can't do anything can now at least do one activity." "Even though I get to do most of these fun things, I'm still sad because some of my friends can't do them with me." After participating in this perspective taking exercise that personally affected all of them, we read Martin's Big Words by Doreen Rappaport and had discussions throughout the week

learning about the influence of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. as well as the influences we have on one another and taking responsibility for our own actions and words.

Grizzlies have been missing our former afternoon helper, Eric Pinard-Janisch. They talk about him every day and we are keeping in touch with him via e-mail. With Eric being born in Alaska, one day we read The Bravest Dog Ever: The True Story of Balto by Natalie Standiford. In 1925, people in the gold-rush town of Nome, Alaska became ill with a terrible disease called diphtheria. A relay of sled-dog teams was sent racing across the frozen wilderness, carrying the precious medicine from Anchorage to Nome, more than 800 miles, needed to keep the town alive. Balto was the lead dog for his team and he travelled 20 hours straight encountering many dangers. If you go to Central Park in New York City there is a statue of Balto that you could visit. The Grizzlies loved this story so much that we have read it numerous times and have learned more by doing research on the computer and reading about the yearly Alaskan Iditarod races- the world's longest sled-dog races through the story Mush by Patricia Seibert. This also got the Grizzlies fascinated with solving a Balto puzzle on the computer and reading other non-fiction stories.

January 23rd marks the beginning of the Year of the dragon. We will be learning about some of the traditional ways this fifteen-day festival is celebrated in China and Korea. We will be celebrating by making dragon masks, Chinese lanterns, baking Chinese moon cakes and learning about the cycles of the moon as well as the animal zodiacs. The Grizzlies learned today that they were all born in the year of the rooster or dog.

The 100th day of Grizzlies arrives on January 31st. We'll be doing lots of math and counting activities involving this big number. Can you believe your children are past the half way mark of Kindergarten already? Beginning a new year is a great opportunity to talk about the form of measurement called time. We've looked at calendars and have talked about days, weeks, months and years. We'll get into learning about seconds, minutes and hours, and working on learning how to read a clock and tell time by the hour and half hour. Following this unit, we will introduce money and learn about coins and their values while recognizing the presidents represented on them.

We look forward to celebrating Valentine's Day and will be sending you highlights of special events taking place for the February vacation week- All Day Grizzlies on Feb.20th-24th.

Happy 6th Birthday to Freddie and Elena on February 22nd!

All the best,
Karen