

# Duck Class

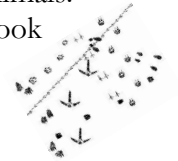
## News for January, 2012

### Class Pictures

#### Looking back and Looking Ahead

Looking back we have to ask ourselves, how odd is it that we end the year without the complications of what we have always known as winter? During the month of December we truly feel that the seasonal warm weather has gifted us with more opportunities to be outside while enjoying “play” as well as visiting and caring for the animals.

As we welcome in the New Year, and the uncertainty of the weather, we look forward to time spent trudging through the snow, looking at foot prints and questioning “Are these our foot prints?” or “Do they belong to an animal?” It is times like this that true exploration begins.



### Nature News

### Sign Language and Music

#### Family Sharing

Special thanks to the families who have so generously donated to our school wide Holiday Sharing Toy Drive. Throughout the school, hundreds of gifts were donated to help children living with cancer. Imagine with every gift given, the smile and ultimate joy for a child to be able to focus on “play” rather than the pain of any given day. As for the parents, we can only hope that watching their child play, takes away the stress they feel if only for a moment. Thanks again for helping to touch some very special lives.

We enjoyed having the opportunity to learn about Hanukkah and how one family celebrates this special Holiday. We hope each of you had a nice Holiday Celebration and enjoyed special time spent with your families.

#### Winter Weather

Winter weather may be just around the corner. It may blow in at any time (if it hasn't already!) So, in preparation for the snow, cold, and ultimate brrrr, we continue to encourage each of you to send complete winter gear with your child. While at school, we encourage each of the children to try to be independent with dressing skills. We begin with snow pants, then jackets etc. While each of the children are working towards getting dressed, it enables us to move about the room helping anyone who has a need. When time allows, please encourage independent dressing at home as well. We are hopeful that by the end of the winter season, the children will have mastered the skill of dressing him or herself. Yeah!! A reminder to all families: Please do not send scarves with your child as they may become a choking hazard and our policy does not allow us to use them. A tightly fitting hat, wearing their hood, and a jacket that is zipped all the way up is usually enough to keep a child warm. Thank you.



We would like to wish each and every one of you a Happy, Healthy New Year.

*-Nancy and Angela*

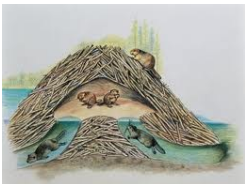
### Animal Homes: Mounds, Nests, Webs , and Lodges

This month we have been very busy learning about animal homes and constructing them around Children's Country Day. We started out learning about termites and the homes they construct out of sand, dirt, saliva, and wood. Pre-2 students helped paper mache a life size termite mound as well as make clay termites. We also went outside and constructed a termite mound out of snow. From termites we switched to another animal architect, birds. Students learned about a variety of different birds and the nests they make. Oven birds construct their nests out of mud, while weaver birds create hanging nests that look like baskets. Pre-2 students created their own nests and hung them from a tree in the nature room. Pre-1 students and toddlers also attempted to build nests out of sticks.



Spiders were our next topic. Pre-2 students learned that some spiders make webs, while others actually dig their home. We talked about the different aspects of the trapdoor spider homes and students created pictures of their favorite spider homes in their nature notebooks. We went outside to the woods and students built webs from yarn. For our final nature classes,

we learned about Beavers. Students learned about the different steps that beavers use to build their lodges. We went out to the woods to create our own beaver lodge. Pre-1 students enthusiastically helped build up the lodge. Toddlers had the chance to create their own little beaver lodges out of wood and rocks.



### Coming in January:

If you are looking for some opportunities to explore nature with your family, here are some local options:

- The Minnesota Science Museum has an amazing exhibit on extreme weather. I highly recommend it!

- In February, the Wildlife Rehabilitation Center will be hosting their annual open house.

The staff will share how they care and rehabilitate Minnesota's wild animals. Check out their website for more information.

In January we will be learning about water. Students will explore the different characteristics of water, learn about Minnesota's water habitats, and spend some time learning about the ocean.

*-Emily*

## Sign Language and Music

**In Sign Language** we're learning to sign the alphabet and how to finger spell our names. Signing the letters is a wonderful visual that helps children in learning their letters and another way to practice the spelling of their name. The Preschool 1 classes have been signing the first letter only of their name. The Burro, Ponies and Llamas practice their full name. We've also learned to sign the phrase, "My name is \_\_\_\_\_" and "What's your name?" We ended the month playing a fun Sign Language Bingo Alphabet game.

**In Music** we've had fun with creative movement as we sing the winter songs we've learned. The children especially enjoy dancing with scarves as we sing "One Little Snowflake" or pretending they're a bear as we sing about the hibernating bears in the winter. We've also been singing and signing the "Alphabet Song" and "What is Your Name?" to reinforce what we're learning in Sign Language. Another favorite song has been, "Three Little Fishies". Everyone enjoys acting this out and swimming with the rainbow colored ribbons. There's also a rhythmic clapping part they love to do on the chorus. Your child might enjoy listening to it at this website. [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iK\\_wrM8OdGY&feature=fvw](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iK_wrM8OdGY&feature=fvw)

