

## Nature with Emily

## Nature Pictures

Welcome to the 2011-2012 school year!

We are already off to a great start in Nature class, exploring Children's Country Day, learning to make scientific observations, and caring for the gardens. I have enjoyed seeing so many familiar faces and meeting so many new friends during the first month of school.

### Maps and Exploration

In our first week of school, we learned about maps, and what they are used for. Students drew their favorite parts of Country Day on their own map as we explored. We continued getting familiar and comfortable with the school grounds later in the week by going on a digital scavenger hunt where we took pictures of our finds to display in the Nature room. Students also learned what makes something a part of nature and participated in a mystery bag game. Pre-1 students spent some time exploring the garden and also learned what makes something a part of nature. The toddlers spent time getting comfortable being with me and had the opportunity to feel and smell a variety of nature objects including a 7 foot tall corn stalk.



### Observation and Harvest

In our second week of nature we became scientists and learned how to make observations. We used a frame to focus on a small portion of the garden and the woods. Students made drawings of their finds in a notebook. Later in the week we harvested basil from the garden and made our own yummy pesto pasta (see recipe below). In pre-1 we learned how to use magnifying glasses and tape measures to explore the garden. In the toddler class, we also spent time harvesting in the garden and looking for worms.

### Apples



We also explored apples. We learned about different kinds of apples and spent time sorting them. We tasted different types of apples to determine what their favorites are. We did an apple dissection to learn about the different parts of the apple. Later in the week we made apple breakfast cookies.

### A New Snake at School

In other news, we got a new nature class pet! A Kenyan Sand Boa just joined the Country Day family! Students are beginning to meet our young male snake and will help with the naming process.

Here are a couple recipes we enjoyed this month:

#### Pesto

3 cups basil                      1 cup olive oil  
2 cloves garlic                1 cup Parmesan cheese

Put basil in a food processor and blend well with 1 tbsp. olive oil. Blend in garlic. Blend in cheese and then olive oil. Enjoy!

#### Breakfast Cookies

1/4 cup softened butter    3/4 cup brown sugar  
2 eggs                            1/2 cup unsweetened applesauce  
1 cup wheat flour            1/2 tsp salt  
1 tsp cinnamon              1 tsp baking soda  
1 cup uncooked oats        1/2 cup dried cranberries  
1/2 cup chopped apples

Combine butter and sugar, and then eggs and applesauce. Add dry ingredients. Fold in apples and cranberries. Spray cookie sheet. Bake at 350 degrees for 13-15 minutes.

*-Emily*

## Sign Language and Music with Sylvia

It's great to be back teaching Sign Language on Tuesdays and Music on Thursdays. I'd like to share some of the areas we'll cover throughout the year.

### Sign Language

In **Sign Language** the children will learn a variety of signs during group time. One of my main goals is that they develop an understanding of what it means to be deaf and that they realize that being deaf makes you no different other than you communicate with the visual language of Sign Language. They'll experience the beauty of the language as we read stories in sign, play games and sing songs in sign. Each month we practice the signs for a different topic as well as review the signs that we've already learned.



*Sign for Pig*

The main areas I cover will be: Animals, colors, numbers, the alphabet, family, foods, signs related with the seasons, basic phrases and deaf awareness. In September the children had fun learning the signs for farm animals as well as some signs for fall. They'll be bringing home some hand-outs soon that show some of the signs we've covered. For those children who are returning students, it's been fun to see how they have remembered a lot of signs from last year and are becoming more comfortable in signing simple sentences.

Your child may also tell you about my 2 puppets named Anna & Robby that come quite frequently to Sign Language. They always love it when I bring them as they are puppets that can "sign".

### Music

In **Music** we'll be exploring music through a variety of activities. Each week the children will learn new songs and sing with string instruments such as the piano, guitar, autoharp and violin. We'll also do a lot of movement and dance and occasionally use the percussion instruments. Quite often the sign language we learn on Tuesday is reinforced with songs on Thursday. In September we sang about apple trees and farm animals. The children especially enjoyed singing "2 Little Apples Hanging on a Tree". We also sang & signed the animals in the song "I went to Visit a Farm One Day". Two other favorite songs with a lot of movement were "See the Ponies Galloping" and "Sammy".



Feel free to contact me anytime if you have any questions about the Music and Sign Language programs.

**-Sylvia**

# Pony Class October News

## SEPTEMBER HIGHLIGHTS

**Class  
Pictures**

The Pony kids have had a busy month making friends, learning about their new routines and exploring around our school. During our first week of school we met several of our animal friends that live both inside and outside. It happened to be our class pet's birthday that week so we spent time planning a surprise birthday party for Charlie, our bearded dragon. What a blast!



During the first week of school we could tell that many of our students had a strong interest in learning about babies. They spent time caring for pretend babies in our dramatic play area, pretended to be parents while playing outside and several children talked about their babies or "soon to be" babies at home. Because of this we focused on baby farm animals during our second week of school. We identified which animals at our school were born from eggs and which were not. We looked for chicken and duck eggs, learned how animals care for their babies and watched a video clip about baby farm animals. The following week we talked about farm food. The Ponies have been learning about where food comes from. We harvested some potatoes, tomatoes and basil from our gardens to make foods such as fried potatoes and pesto. Next time you sit down to eat with your child, see if he or she can tell you which foods come from a garden and which foods come from animals.

After Applepalooza we spent the last week of September learning about apples and doing lots of apple cooking. We made apple crisp, apple cider and apple jelly. We enjoyed picking apples from our trees and taste testing a few different types of apples. Tasty!

To learn more about what we've been up to please check out our blog at:

<http://www.ccdsponytales.blogspot.com/> . To receive regular updates click "Join this site" on the right side of the screen. We update our blog a few times a week.

### REMINDERS

Please be sure to check your child's binder each day. Weekly notes should stay in the rings of the binder throughout the school year. Please initial them and write any comments or questions you may have on the back. Any loose papers can be taken out to stay at home.

The Ponies love to be outside so please continue to send appropriate outside gear to school each day. Jumping in puddles is so much fun so be sure to pack those rain boots!

You don't have to wait for your child's birthday to visit our classroom. Please stop in, call or e-mail us if you have anything you'd like to share with the Pony class. We love to cook, read stories, meet pets, learn about occupations and see photos from new places. You're welcome any time!

### NEXT MONTH

October 10<sup>th</sup> & 11<sup>th</sup>: Picture Days

October 20<sup>th</sup>-21<sup>st</sup>: No School MEA

It was great catching up with so many of you at Applepalooza!

Happy Fall!

~Carrie and Laura~