

Growing Tree's May & June Newsletter

Can anyone remember back to September? What a difference a few months make! All of the children are happy – and I cannot tell you how many compliments they all receive when visitors come and tour the classrooms! It's so hard for new families to believe that their children will be doing just what your "big kids" handle so well!

In T-K the kids are reading, spelling, estimating, questioning, challenging, and solving math problems! They take care of themselves and their friends. – They really amaze us with everything they know!

Our Pre-K kids are getting ready for Kindergarten and T-K. They have perfected the art of being friends and being powerful. One day you're on top of the hill, next you're not – they all get their turn! All Kindergarten skills are mastered – or very close to it – and the children are thinking ahead. They know they are ready for the next step and while they sometimes decide they want to stay at Pre-K next year – it is a very short-lived wish!

Our Three's are learning so much – letters, numbers, shapes, cooperation, acceptance, and tolerance are pretty well established (well, tolerance is an on-going life lesson!). There is a new comfort level in the Three's room – much more self confidence and much more awareness of what they can do! Visiting Pre-K is always exciting!

In the Two's class... well.... Perhaps it can be best summed up by saying, the children never stop moving or talking and the direction of the movement is not at all important or purposeful! Jumping, spinning, racing both inside and out are non-stop. So is conversation – all at once of course! And they surprise us all when the circle time bell rings... and they actually pick up the toys and run to get their carpet square so group time can begin!

The Tot's are busy in a much more cautious manner. They love learning new things like how to eat purple! and drink orange! And most of them are willing to try anything that is introduced. Interaction is strong – they enjoy hugging each other and making new connections with a shy smile to open the door!

All in all, these classrooms are amazing and wonderful places to spend our days!

Laureen is arranging our annual school picnic. Thursday May 20th from 5 – 7 pm. It's always a fun time – lots of food and friends! Make sure you fit us in among baseball practice, swim team practice, and elementary school activities! Invitations will be in cubbies in the beginning of May with food assignments.

Summer Camp registration is underway. If you have not done so already, drop off your blue registration with full camp payment in the office!

We have just completed the parking lot landscaping and renovation. Please remind your children to tread carefully with the new plantings so we can all watch them grow and flourish!

Reminder – The billing statement you receive for May will reflect May tuition and ½ of June. We request ALL final payments be made with your May 1 statement because June is a short and very busy time with graduations and the start of summer camp!

Lysbeth and I want to take this opportunity to thank you all for a wonderful year and your great children - you all make Growing Tree a great place to be!

Linda

DATES TO REMEMBER:

May 14	Summer Camp registration due
May 20	School Picnic
May 31	Memorial Day
June 10	T-K Graduation 5:30 -6:30 PM
June 10	Pre-K Graduation (Pat/April/Nikki) 9:00 – 10:30 AM
June 11	Pre-K Graduation (Lauren/Manal) 9:00 -10:30 AM
(all graduations are held at the Veteran’s Memorial Building in Lafayette Invites will be sent home at the end of May)	
June 11	Last day of school
June 15 – July 30	Summer Camp
August 26	Back to School open house 5 – 6 PM
September 7	First Day of School!

Tots

I know it's hard to believe, but our school year is coming to an end. What a wonderful time we have had in the tots class! Your children have grown in so many ways in the past months. Comfort items used at the beginning of the year, such as binkies, blankets and bottles are no longer used. We no longer need to remind the kids that "mommy comes back after lunch". They all get it! Not only do your little ones have a lot more hair now, they are getting lots of words! It is so fun for us as teacher to be a part of your child's early accomplishments. Our pajama week was a lot of fun! Thanks for bringing in books to read for a special story time, the kids loved it! The pancakes were a big hit! Henry gobbled his up, and held out his plate saying, "more!" Ella smiled and asked for more syrup on hers! Pretty yummy snack. Circle time is a very interactive time, and your kids just love it. Ana always reminds us to get the "bag" before we sit down. The "bag" she is referring to is full of many props, such as different containers full of shapes, colors, books and finger play activities. Claire is always very helpful. If a friend is not sure what container to put some-thing back into, she always helps them out by showing them. The weather has been a bit unpredictable this last month. On the days we can get outside for awhile, the kids really enjoy running around and getting some of their energy out. Annalise and Shawn love to chase each other all over, while Nicholas, Estella and Thatcher prefer to play in the sandbox. We have enjoyed picnic lunches outside, when the weather permits. And we have taken the children downstairs to play in the 2s yard and room several times now. They are all ready to move on to a bigger class now! For the month of May we will be talking about spring, painting colorful flowers, and planting seeds, that we will watch grow. We will introduce insects, look for some cute art projects to come home! Mothers Day is such a special day, as is Fathers Day and your children will be making very special presents for you, to show how much they love you. Our last two weeks of school, the first two of June, we will be talking about the ocean. What lives in there, what is sounds and looks like and fun things to do at the beach. I would like to take this opportunity to thank each and every one of our wonderful tots families for an incredible year with your little one. Tonia and I feel very fortunate to have been part of their young lives. We wish all of you a fun-filled summer.

Barb and Tonia

Two's Newsletter

The children are enjoying our sunny days outside and our rainy days inside. Being indoors we try to stay as busy as possible. **Jack and Archer** love to play obstacle course, while **Trevor, Luke, Oliver, and Kieran** keep everyone entertained playing 'Star Wars.' They stick the blocks together to make spaceships and fly them around the classroom. **Jenna and McKenzie** really like to play the flashlight game, and **Avery W.** asks for the red beanbag song. **Madison** will position herself in the middle of the room and just dance to whatever music is playing on the CD player, although she seems to have a preference for classical.

We hope it will be hot enough soon, so the children can play with the water tables outside! One day when we were outside on a warm day, **Abigail B., Jordan, Yovela, and Lila** took turns going up and down on the bar steps on the structure. I remember it was not so long ago that they couldn't even make it up one step. **William, Olivia, and Abigail C.** will spend their outdoor time digging and building in the sandbox. They have become quite intricate in their sand 'cities.' The children no longer require us to push them on the bike-o-round since they have all grown enough to pedal themselves. **Ashley, Gwen, Gina, and Hannah** will speed round and round with Oliver directing the traffic on one of the separate bikes. When he says "red light" they all stop.

It has been nothing but fun for our two's soon to be three's. We have been having little visits to the class rooms the two's will be in next year. This gives them the opportunity to meet their new teachers and to familiarize them with the classroom, as well as help with the transition. **Kate** expressed on a visit that, "It's cool here, cause there are swings." **Theo and Macsen** thought that the new toys were "cool." I think they are all becoming ready for the change over. Do keep in mind for those children that may not be as anxious to move on, the summer camp program can help with the transition a great deal, because they will be with their new teachers.

Mean while we have been talking about Ocean. We like to share and pass around shells, sand dollars, and coral so they can get a feel for what lives in the ocean. **Sierra**, (looking at the coral) said, "It's bumpy and soft!" **Caroline** looked at the sand dollar and said "little holes!" when it was **Erin's** turn to hold the sand dollar she looked at it and said, "It has a little tiny hole in it!" by the time it got to **Zubin**, he said, "It's broken!" Noticing that the sand dollar was indeed broken, **Beckett** asked, "It has ouchy?" then turned it around and said "Star!"

As we were talking about sea life in the ocean (during circle time), we asked, "What is your favorite ocean animal?" **Zubin** said "shark!" **Peyton** looked at him and said "Shark eat people!" **Jacob** said, "I have a sting ray, because I have one at home. A little one." Now it seems that the stingray is a

favorite with our little ones, because **Nina** said, “sting ray.” **Sam** raised her hand and said “fishes.” **Nikki** smiled and said “favorite dolphin.” **Lauren** made claw gestures with her hands and said, “crab!” It was very cute when **Livia** shook her head and said “starfish.” **Isabella** said, “I think sea stars are so pretty.” **Avery J.** agreed but said she liked dolphins.

Kaila answered, “ I like mermaids, and I want to be a mermaid.” **Adria** and **Amanda** agreed but they specified, “Only Ariel, she’s the prettiest.” **Mackie** replied, “ I want to be a shark cause they are cool!” Then **Gracie** said, she could be, “Nemo and live in a sea anemone (anemone).”-So cute.

We learned new songs like “Three Little Fishes” and “Five Little Sea Shells.” Their favorite one was “The Waves on the Beach.” We also are starting a new theme “Rainforest and Jungle.” We talk about what kind animals live in that habitat and what they look like. They seem to like the book “The colors of the rainforest” because it has pictures of colorful birds, flowers and frogs. **Luca** with big eyes said “Frog yellow and black!” **Ella** smiled pointed to the flower, “red flower.” We also have been doing some dancing! The kids have so much fun with the new “Monkey dance” that the children now request it. **Mikaela** waves her arms like a little monkey and will say “ooh, ooh, ah, ah songs!” **Joe** likes to request the pirate dance. Joe will say, “fold arms!” and starts to dance it! **Erin C.** likes the ‘listen and move’ dance. She has gotten really good at jumping on one foot.

As the year is coming to an end we are so honored and privileged to be a part of your child’s first years of preschool. We will miss them so much! We thank you for trusting us to provide your child with the best Pre-school experience. See you soon!

Eveyn, Senia, Cynthia, Tonia, Barb, Megan

May/June 2010

Growing Tree Preschool Young Three's

The earth is in fall bloom, and the children are as well. They dance and buzz amongst one another, weaving bonds of friendship as they use their knowledge of one another to explore their universe together. Now, they have acquired the tools of perception and compassion, their young minds work with energy purposefully gathering strength and building awareness which allows them to master the next developmental leap they will take. It is astounding to observe each child as they each tenaciously conquer the challenges of this time of development. The wonderful aspect of this developmental stage hi children is the tremendous growth hi communication and interpersonal socialization, the children gain the awareness that their peers have infinite gifts to offer and that they are able to receive and share in those gifts together.

The children are enjoying discovering all of nature's treasures, as they expand then- awareness of the world around them. As we explored the life hi the Growing Tree gardens, we found many interesting creatures to study and appreciate. As we explored the life of the honey bee, Cole and Keelin enjoyed leading our little worker bees out in search of flowers, Keelin reminded us, "I am the queen bee and Cole is the king bee!" We all giggled as we pretended to be honeybees, our arms extended, our mouths humming a soft buzz, we floated over to the garden. Tyler, Annie, Ryan, Maggie, and Jila were the first to spot a few honey bees in the flower patch, Maggie and Tyler excitedly called to then- friends, "the bees are dancing in the flower powder!" Tyler observed, "Look there are two lands of honey bees." Annie and Jila were wide eyed as they explored, Jila shared, "I see their wings!" Annie agreed, "I can see through them, they are beautiful!" We all joyfully imagined we were landing upon the flowers, placing our noses right upon the flowers, breathing in the fragrance of the flowers. Katie offered, "It smells like honey!" Ryan looked at Katie and responded, "I see a little baby bee!" Maggie suggested, "It is following its Mom!" Chiara delighted hi sharing, "I want to show my Mom when she comes!" Liam smiled, "Me, too!" Naina asked, "When will they make the honey?" Our young scientists are bright with curiosity and observations.

As we read a science book that explained the different ways insects support life on Earth, Liam and Sophie shared their views, Liam offered, "The baby bees are cute and little!" Sophie, "There are ladybug and butterfly babies, too!" Delaney chose to assert her opinion, "I like real babies, not bug babies!" Sofia concurred, "My brother likes to find insects, and I like to play with people, better." These interactive circle discussions support the open ended lessons that build curiosity and catalyze the process of discovery in these young learners.

We are busy learning about our planet and we are encouraging the children to help find ways to protect, preserve, and nurture our precious planet. We are observing the youthful exuberance that motivates the children to use our recycle and reuse cans, to carefully turn off the water, to save energy by not using the bathroom light during daylight hours, to turn hi broken toys and to ask "Can you fix it?", to plant seeds, to gently observe the creatures and to appreciate their value, it is clear the children are being encouraged by their families to respect then- Earth. Tali told us, "We recycle at my home, it is fun." Bodie alerted us, "You have to help all the animals, they are cool!" Whitney added, we take care of our dog, he helps us, too! Drew added, "He gives us licking baths!" Jackson chimed in "Doggies tickle when they lick!" Dylan sweetly remembered, "My big dog always licked me when I was little." Rachel wisely asserted, "Well, do you know dogs and cats don't really need baths, they just use their tongues. So, they don't use that much water. Gaetan expanded upon the topic, "Me and my brother, Dante get to share a bath together sometimes that is really fun, too!" Max told us, "If you take a shower, it can save the water; I am learning to do that. I help my Mom, and my Dad to make our yard nice, too!" Everett told us, "I help my Mommy and Daddy to plant at my house." The children were excited as we made our recycle art sculptures using old recyclable containers, Ella, Rachel, Sofia, Nate, Parker and Nicole were so involved. At

clean-up time, nobody wanted to stop gluing, Nicole became the group spokesperson, "Can we please make more? !" Everyone chimed hi, "Please, please, please!" As we explored ecology and conservation we asked the children to respond to these prompts, how can I help to protect the earth...? I enjoy our Earth here are their responses.

How can I help to protect the earth...?

Bodie – I help to save water. I save water for the ocean and the fish, and the dolphins. I save water for Lake Tahoe for the crawdads to swim hi.

Ella- I can plant a tree that grows bigger and bigger.

Delaney-I can take a walk with my family and friends.

Everett-I can pick-up trash off the ground and put it in the garbage can.

Jackson- I like to feed the fish and sharks in the ocean.

Keelin-I give my dress to Molly so she can wear it, and I can share with her.

Max-I can recycle, so the polar bears have ice.

Naina-I like to make friends with the ocean and the earth. I put my trash in the recycle bags. I want to swim in the ocean with the sea stars.

Nate- I can ride my bike with my Dad. We will not use a car.

Nicole-I want to help the earth! I plant seeds, the watermelon seeds will grow into big watermelons.

Parker-I like to play with dad outside and I like to play with all my friends at Growing Tree. My Dad and me look for little caterpillars, ladybugs, and butterflies to show my friends.

Rachel-I can give my skirt to another girl when it is too small.

Sofia-I can take care of my fish at my home. I am a good friend to all of the creatures, animals, and fish!

I enjoy our Earth...

Annie-I love to find pretty flowers for my Mommy, she is pretty!

Bodie-I love the water for having the fish live and stay in mere. I like to see the fish swim.

Delaney-I love swimming in the ocean at the beach with my family.

Dylan-I loved playing with my dog when I was a baby, it chased me in the garden. We played in the plants and trees.

Ella-I learn about the Earth, the trees, the ocean, the dolphins, the butterflies. I love to visit the animals with my family. I love the structure of the building where my Daddy works,

Everett-I love to keep the earth clean.

Gaetan- I love the sun because it keeps me warm.

Jackson- I like the stars and the ships with people in them flying in the sky!

Katie- I love the beautiful rainbows, they are colorful.

Liam- I love to go on the pirate ships on the ocean, I have to take my Mommy and Daddy, my Grandparents, and you guys, too!

Parker- I see the beautiful, colorful flowers, and I feel the cool grass on my feet.

Max- I have seen the rainbows. I love all the colors.

Nicole -I like to water the plants and flowers with Grandpa and my Mommy, too! I love to talk to my Daddy and all of my family.

Ryan- There are waterfalls. I like getting wet.

Sofia- I love the mountains, I play in the snow with my friends and I make snowmen with the trees around us. I like the snow.

We journeyed around the world learning about some of the unique people, cultures, environments, and animals that define our Earth. The children enjoyed learning about the cultures in Asia, Africa, South America, Central America and Europe. We learned that in many cultures the older siblings take on a lot of responsibility in helping to care for their younger siblings. We learned that Grandparents play a helpful role in teaching their grandchildren from the experiences they have lived through. The children have begun to cherish the experience of being helpful and they each were able to share ways in which they can be helpful to their families. Maggie shared, "I like to be with my Gammy and my Nona, and they both love me" Tali, told us, "I like to help my Mom to do cooking." Cole smiled as he shared, "My sisters like to take care of me, they are nice to me, and they like to draw with me." Sophie expressed her adoration for her Grandparents, "I love them, and they read stories to me and Sam." Whitney and Drew shared, too! Whitney told us, our Gammy and Poppy pick us up at school, they are funny, too! Drew shared, I love all of my family, I like to see everybody, and play with them, all my cousins, and my Aunt Pam and my Uncle, we like to have a sleep over at their house. Chiara and Jila told us they love to spend time with their Grand moms. Jila told me, "We do art, together." Chiara shared, "We read and talk, I like that!" Ryan was so sweet, as he shared, "My Grandma takes care of me and Max, when Mommy and Daddy are at work, she is so nice, and she is happy!"

As we traveled to Asia, we learned about the beautiful cherry blossom trees that grow in Japan. The children enjoyed drawing and artfully decorating their trees with tissue blossoms. Each child started their tree by drawing a seed and roots and then drawing the tree growing up from the seed, their art is displayed in the room, please take a peek when you come to class. We read a special story called, "Tree of Cranes" which inspired a lesson on creative thinking and expressive language.

The children were asked to decorate a crane that carries the wishes of the child in the story, and to tell us a wish they have, we asked them to think about a wish that is special and that they could perhaps one day fulfill. We enjoyed their thoughtful responses...

I wish....

Annie - that I can help Mommy take care of my new baby brother.

Bodie - to have the seals swim in the ocean water, they will grow up to be bigger.

Chiara- to fly in the sky on a blue and green bird, Daddy, Mommy, Jila, Joe and John will come, too!

Cole - for a tractor for me to drive. I will go to Tyler's house, and then I will go home to Mommy and Dad.

Delaney- to be a princess, like Cinderella and I will swing in my dress with my friend Parker!

Drew- to visit Diego, Mom, Dad, Whitney, Dylan, and me will go to the mountains to sled in the snow.

Dylan- to go on a boat ride with my Daddy, we will go fast in the water!

Ella- I could ride a pink unicorn and go to the princess stars.

Everett - that I will see a rainbow with my Mommy.

Gaetan - I will be a good big brother to my new baby.

Jila- I had a pearl necklace to share with my family.

Katie- I really want to be in a play. I want to be in the Sleeping Beauty play with my sister. I will be the princess and my sister will be a fairy.

Keelin - that I could have a butterfly come into my house.

Liam- I could play pirates with my Mommy and Daddy.

Luke - to paint pictures of zebras, alligators, giraffes, crocodiles, and fish.

Max- I could see a rainbow and colorful butterflies.

Naina- that I will see a rainbow when I visit Yosemite with my family.

Nate- to go over the Bay Bridge with my Mom. I wish to walk on the Golden Gate Bridge with my Jamma, Daddy, Mommy, Ben and Sam.

Nicole- to have a kitty and to take care of it.

Niklas - a little bee would come sit next to me.

Parker- to go on a roller coaster with my Mom. I will go on the Tiger coaster at the zoo with my Mommy. I will go on special walks out side with my Daddy.

Rachel- I could see a deer eating grass.

Ryan- to see a zebra, and I will pet it. I wish to go to the zoo with Mommy, Daddy, Max, me, and my whole family, I want to see the tigers, the lions, the zebras and the dolphins.

Sofia- I could see a pretty rainbow, want to touch it.

Sophie- to fly likes Tinker Bell, I will fly to Pixie Hollow and I will play with the fairies.

Tali- to go to Mexico with all of my family, and to play at the ocean and to see the sea turtles.

Tyler- that I could dig sand at the park with Jackson, Cole, and Ryan.

Whitney- to go for a ride on an elephant with my family and my cousins.

Jackson- to go on a ride with Luke Sky Walker and everybody will come with us.

Maggie- to have a special party for my family. I love them!

We have welcomed two new students into our class, Luke and Niklas, the children are enjoying learning and playing with them. Annie and her family have welcomed their new baby, she is over the moon, and we have been told by Grandma that Mommy and baby are doing wonderfully well.

In May and June we will continue to build our skills in preparation for Pre- K. Our topics will include Dinosaurs, Fossils, Geology of the Earth, Astronomy, The Rainforest, The Ocean, The Desert and summertime fun.

We would like to send a huge THANK YOU to all of our families for you each have made this year a very special one! We truly appreciate the enthusiasm, support and love you each have offered throughout this wonderful school year. We appreciate the way each of your children come to school joyful and fulfilled with a desire to learn and play as a part of our class family, we have become a wonderful group of friends .We have enjoyed the honor of being your children's teachers and they will remain in our hearts always.

With Love, Miss Sandy and Miss Sharyn

OLDER THREES CLASS Vicki, Karen and Senia

Somehow it is May already and we are writing our last newsletter for the year. The time has gone so quickly it hardly seems possible, and yet when we look at the children and see the amazing amount of growth that has occurred over the last few months it's clear that they are now ready to move up to be the "big kids" at Growing Tree. The children have become quite cohesive as a class and the transition across the parking lot will be easy since they will take all of their friends with them. We will miss all of the children, but while we are sad to see them leave we are excited for them to experience new adventures in their new pre-k class. We hope everyone will come back to visit next year and tell us all about what they are doing. The threes is such a special year—the children come in so young and go out so grown up—it's a really fun time. We have enjoyed sharing this very special year with your very special children.

We have been learning about where we live and about other people and where they live. In our class we all live on the earth, we all live in the United States, we all live in California, but we live in different cities in California. "I live in Orinda in California," said Annabelle. "We're talking about where we live in California and Moraga," agreed Anthony. "I live in Moraga and I live in two states in Moraga and California," continued Jason. "I go in my room upstairs in Moraga and it's in our planet at the globe," said Gavin. "Moraga is a tiny little dot on the globe," Cyril told us. "There's cities that we all live in and we all live in the same state, but not in the same city because it's a really big place and all the way to San Diego," explained Julia. "We made houses and put it on that map about what cities about where you live," Porter told us. "We made houses on the map and it's in California and its... and we can just look at the map," continued Avery. "There's a lot of the houses on our map," observed Cameron. "We're doing about where we live and we made the globes," Ryan told us. "We're painting globes," said Christine. "We're painting a globe and you live in there at California," added Bianca. "We live on the globe in Moraga," continued Nathan. "And about where we live because people like their houses and some in California and some people could live in Antarctica," added Max. "We painted a globe blue," said Antonia. "It was fun," added Marianna," and I paint green." "I made a flag of an American flag," said Ben. "We made a flag and red, white, blue and stars," added Harshal. "We maked a flag and we colored it and a bear and grass and that's it. On white paper," explained Charlie.

We know that people are all alike wherever they live. We all like to laugh and play and have fun. But there are also some differences: different languages, different customs and stories and different skin and hair colors. We think the ways we are alike are more important than the ways we are different and we think it would be fun to be friends with all the people all over the world.

We learned about Tanzania, which is close to the equator. "It's hot because when it's next to hot spots then it's hot," said Jason. "We learned about the people in Tanzania

and it's hot," Callen told us. "It's hot there and it's really hot there and they wear different clothes and they didn't wear gloves or mittens or scarves," Christine told us. "And different houses have grass roofs in Tanzania," added Nathan. "When power is not there and electricity then the lights go out and you use flashlights," Callen told us. "Giraffes eat leaves and they just walk around," said Charlie. "And elephants walk in a family," said Annabelle. "Elephants cross the road and you have to stop," continued Cameron. "When cars come the elephants get mean," added Jack. "The giraffes, if you're driving up the road you might see a giraffe," said Christine. "Lions walk around and they kill a tiger," Avery told us. "Monkeys like to take your food," added Bianca. "You can see animals on the road like maybe the hippos in the water," Ryan told us. "And it's hot 'cause the equator is next to it," added Zachary.

Next we learned about Norway where it's very cold, and it's light all the time in the summer and dark all the time in the winter. "It's cold in it and it snows in Norway," Callen told us. "The sun, it comes out during all day and all night," said Ben. "The sun at night time and at day time when it's dark and I like the dark when it's night time," said Charlotte. "It's cold there and the sun is bright when it's night time," continued Porter. "It's by the North Pole and snow comes there, the North Pole to there," Nathan explained. "They have lots of foxes," said Charlie. "And there's trolls," continued Charlie. "They are not nice 'cause they do the wrong things," added Cameron. "It's cold there and trolls trick people and they have crazy hair," said Annabelle. "At the North Pole it's cold and if it's winter it's dark in January and in the summer it's light," shared Zachary. "Vikings rowed the ships and they had shields and Viking head bands," Gavin told us. "The Vikings builded the boat and rowed the boat 'cause they didn't have jets," continued Jason. "The Vikings row the boat and I don't want to row a boat," Harshal decided. "We made sail boats and they had sails and they're Vikings," continued Liam. "The trolls are in Norway and they don't listen to anybody and somebody comes and tells if they're right or wrong," said Ben. "Their hair sticks up and they take people's stuff," continued Julia. "And people teach the trolls to be nice," added Charlotte. "Tanzania has houses with no heat and Norway has houses with heat because it's cold," Reed told us. "Some houses have grass roofs and we learned about there's no electric in grass houses and they don't have any lights," said Max. Norway and Tanzania are very different places to live, and each is a very wonderful and special place.

We learned about Australia where there are lots of different animals and when it is summer in California it is winter in Australia. "Summer is hot and winter is cold and Christmas in the summer in Australia," Max told us. "There's strange animals like the dingo and the plata...um, plata...um, just the plata (platypus)," said Christine. "Wombat is like a bear," thought Harshal. "We learned about koalas and they eat leaves and they sit in trees," Olivia told us. "Koalas eat leaves." agreed Reed. "We made a koala and he eats leaves and he lives in Australia," added Bianca. "There's kangaroos there," said Annabelle. "I think the kangaroo is going to talk to joey," Harshal told us. "Kangaroos, they jump and they have babies in their picket." explained Gavin. "Kangaroos hop in Australia," agreed Ben. "There's a kangaroo and a koala and it's Christmas at spring," said Christine. "When it's Christmas it's summer in Australia," Cyril corrected. "Christmas is in summer at Australia," Max agreed, "and they could go trick-or-treating."

“Ekinas (echidnas) can walk and they have spikes and ekonas (echidnas) look like spikes,” Porter told us. “I have a book that has snakes in Australia,” Nathan shared. “And there’s crocodiles and they live in swamps in Australia” Jason told us. “A lizard has a blue tongue and I have a pink tongue and I like blue,” Antonia told us. “The lizard and the tongue, it was so big and blue and catch flies,” continued Marianna. “Blue is like Blue (our class pet) and she’s a girl” added Harshal. “A dragon could eat the platypus because they are just good because he has a tail,” thought Jack. “They have lots of animals and a million animals and I have stuffed animals,” finished up Anthony.

Then we learned about Hawaii. Hawaii is part of the United States and it’s a group of islands. Some of our friends have taken vacations in Hawaii. “There’s lots of green stuff there and you have to take an airplane,” said Charlie. “It’s hot and we need tank tops and shorts,” Avery told us, “and we made a flower necklace.” “They have lots of fish inside the water,” added Ryan. “Snakes are there and lots of flowers,” continued Porter. “It’s really hot and they have flower necklaces,” confirmed Cyril. “There’s flowers in Hawaii, and it’s hot at Tanzania, and it’s cold at the North Pole,” remembered Reed. “There’s turtles and they swim,” said Callen, “and we saw turtles that swims yesterday at Berkeley ‘cause they have turtles that swim.” “I went to the ocean and I went in the pool and we went on a boat and we saw some dolphins and whales and we played,” Jack told us about his trip to Hawaii. “Coconut trees grow in hot places like Hawaii,” said Annabelle. “And we did a dance and it was Hawaii music and we did moving your hands,” added Zachary. “We made coconut trees and we did a hula,” summed up Ben.

Next we talked about Mexico. Mexico is right next to California where we live so we thought it would be good to know about it. “They make lots of good food and they make burritos and I like the burritos,” Anthony said. “They have quesidillas,” continued Ben. “And cheese,” added Jack. “They have quesedillas and you can dip it in salsa and I like it,” Nathan told us. “You eat so you have strong bodies and I eat quesidillas and I like tortillas,” said Gavin. “You put chicken with quesidillas at my house sometimes and I like it plain with white cheese on it,” Christine shared. “I don’t like quesidillas, I like pasta,” Antonia told us. “They’re near the warm ocean and we’re going to go to Mexico soon to see the warm ocean ‘cause it’s really warm,” Charlotte told us. “I goed to the beach and I swim and that’s the best part and I was swimming with my Mommy,” said Olivia. “Mexico is close and I stayed there at the red home and it’s all red,” Wyatt told us. “It’s close and we could drive a car there,” added Nathan. “It’s next to California and you can drive,” agreed Jason. “They are our neighbor because they live next to California and it’s close,” Annabelle explained. “I know it’s close and it’s sunny there and that’s the only thing I know,” said Avery. “It’s warm and flowers grow,” added Ryan. “And we’re making a sun because we’re learning about Mexico and it’s warm,” continued Annabelle. “And it’s far away and my soccer game is on the orange path,” Marianna told us. “We made Mexican bowls,” said Christine. “We made pots like people in Mexico,” agreed Ben. “We eat cookies and I made a ball (for the Mexican bowl),” shared Harshal. “They have Mexico hats that cover your eyes,” Julia told us. “The hat is all black and I like blue and Thomas is my favorite and I colored blue,” said Harshal. “My hat is pink, blue, blue, blue and yellow, green, red and I like blue,” Antonia shared. “They have big

hats and I have a hat with a string so it can't blow away," Marianna told us. "Mexico, it's hot and they cook food outside and they speak Spanish at Spanish class," said Max. "There's a monster in Mexico and sometimes there's a movie about Mexico and when they say monster the Mexico people run away and they speak 'hola'," said Reed. We're all having fun finding out about the different places in the world.

Coming up we'll learn about the rain forest in South America, recycling to help take care of our earth, things that are up in the sky, farms, insects and we'll finish our year with a week of camping, with pajama days, s'mores, pancakes and stories. In May we will take a field trip across the parking lot to visit our next year's classroom and meet our teachers for next year, and we'll check out the "big kid" playground. It's going to be a really busy; really fun filled next few weeks. We hope in our year together that we have instilled in each child the idea that learning is fun. Children who enjoy learning will do well throughout their entire school career and our goal for the threes class isn't what they learn, but simply that they enjoy the experience of finding out about new things. We're so glad we still have the next few weeks together to keep learning, playing and having fun together. It's been a wonderful year and we will miss each individual child. We wish you a wonderful summer, and please come back to visit us next year and tell us about your new adventures.

Pre-K
Pat/Nikki/April

Spring has sprung and the end of the year is in sight! Your Pre-K child has grown and developed so much this past school year. We have had such a great year! Each boy and girl brings something so unique to our Pre-K class. We have enjoyed every single one of them! Thank you, parents, for a wonderful school year!

April has been a month of discovering our wonderful planet. We ventured to Costa Rica and Africa and we did a week unit on Earth Day! We discussed things we do and can do more of to help protect our wonderful planet Earth. We asked a question "What can you do to help the Earth" and here are some responses.

Ben M. "I'm going to plant an apple tree to help the earth. I would eat my own apples and I wouldn't have to buy them at the store that have to be trucked in."

Luke "My cousin and I would water our apple tree. Its leaves help us breath."

Lindsay "I will plant a flower so the earth looks pretty."

Sam "Flower's make oxygen so the earth can breath."

Erin "I would plant a flower and a tree to help the earth breath."

Dominic "Help it and plant a tree so I can breath oxygen."

Peyton "We have a lemon tree in our backyard. We water it so it will grow more and make more shade for me to sit under."

Bennett "I want to plant an apple tree so I can eat apples and the leaves will make more oxygen."

Jack H. "I will plant a pretty flower so the earth stays alive or it will turn into a desert."

Maggie "I want to plant an orange tree to help the earth. The new leaves will make more oxygen."

Chase "I want to get apples on my own tree so the people at Safeway wouldn't have to get truck drivers to bring apples to the store."

Shane "I would put bananas in the compost and put paper and cans in the recycle bin."

Sofia "I will go to the park and pick up paper and bottles and cans. I wear gloves."

Ella "Make flowers with dirt and the leaves will make oxygen."

Jack A. "The earth needs lots of plants to help me grow. The plants give us oxygen. You can see the green plants from outer space."

Dania "I already pick up gum off the floor of my house to make my house clean."

Ben R. "I would never cut down trees in the rain forest because the animals there need their home like the monkeys, snakes and birds."

Charlie "I would use things again. I was at my pool swimming."

Rachel "I don't think people in the rain forest should cut down trees because the birds and frogs and tigers would lose their homes."

Brian "I want to fly a rocket ship to space with my little brother Luke and my big brother Jake, my dad and my mom."

Jacque "I will plant plants so they will make oxygen. We need oxygen to help us breath the clean air.

Such wonderful and unique ideas! Our future generation is in good company!

We only have a few weeks left to enjoy Pre-K! We will be exploring outer space, springtime and ocean and beaches. Then we will wrap up the school year with farm, circus and summer fun themes.

Our graduation ceremony is a very special day for our Pre-K kids. Our goal is to learn our graduation songs and practice our ceremony routine so all of the children are well prepared and excited for this special event.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS - Our graduation will take place on Thursday, June 10th, 9-10:30. More details and information will follow.

Have a fun and safe summer and a great year in Kindergarten or TK. You are ready for an exciting adventure next year. Way to go!



Laureen's and Manal's Pre-K



Spring has sprung and love is in the air! Girls are chasing boys, boys are playing with girls. The children are so filled with energy and excitement as if they are ready to bust! This time of year is so fulfilling for us teachers, as the children are so happy and content in our daily routine. They have made such wonderful friendships with their classmates and a pride of ownership of our classroom. We joke that we could go stay home and they wouldn't miss us, but then who would unlock the door and fix the snack!

We have finished our alphabet sharing activity. What a fun experience it has been. Each and every child has learned how to give three clues, speak out loud in front of their peers and sit patiently, while waiting to be chosen to guess. Also the children incorporated this activity into their free choice, taking turns pretending to be the teacher, the clue giver and the guessers. They all unanimously said the best part is stumping each other!

As we finished up our "Around the World" unit we talked a lot about our earth and how we could help it. We made many recycle crafts. Read Dr. Seuss's "Lorax" and created a free art project of an ideal forest. We also made bird feeders out of stale bagels, Crisco and birdseed. While talking about the way WE can help the earth this is what the children told us:

Beatriz: keep our earth clean by recycling; **Charlotte:** pick up trash to recycle and stay healthy and clean; **Kristina:** fix the earth; **Ryan:** by cleaning up and using tools; **Jessica:** keeping my home clean; **Alex Yee:** recycle everyday, we do it everyday; **Dante:** saving trees, they give us paper; **Paige:** Earth gives us houses, we need to recycle; **Romey:** Earth gives us food like grapes; **Cameron:** take care of the animals; **Hannah:** recycle all your garbage; **Emi:** Recycling paper from trees; **Eamon:** Clean up the garbage in space; **Kate:** planting lots of food; **Skylar:** planting trees for Oxygen; **Zach:** cleaning up your campsite; **Jack:** planting lots of seeds.; **Parker:** throwing away all trash and gardening; **John:** cleaning up my toys and keeping my room clean; **Hadley:** planting and growing flowers.

In April we turned our playhouse into the *International Space Center* as we explored space, planets and astronauts. The children have created their own solar systems, tried a tasty astronaut snack, drank tang, decorated their own spaceship and went on a pretend space walk!

We have also discovered what happens during the spring, talking about insects, gardens and planting and we went to the "Beach" to learn about all the sea and ocean creatures.

During the month of May we will be practicing our graduation songs! I am sure you have been hearing a few of them at home already. This should be a fun and exciting time for the kids. We are proud of each and every child and strive for a "stress-free celebration for all of you and your families. More information will be sent home soon. Mark your calendars: Graduation is Friday, June 11, 9:00 am at the Veteran's Hall in Lafayette.

We still need to **celebrate** a few more VIP'S. Please sign up on the calendar if you have not already done so.

We will continue with our guest readers at 12:30 if you would like to read to us please let us know!

It seems as if we just said hello and **welcome** and now we must say good-bye and **thank you**. Thank you for letting us teach your children this year, and thank you for always being so enthusiastic to help us out no matter what we needed! You are the best. We will miss each and everyone of you. Please come back to visit next year!

Have a Great Summer!

Laureen and Manal ☺

Transitional Kindergarten

May/June 2010

We can't believe this is our last newsletter...where has this year gone? We're definitely not ready to give your children up! April has been filled with springtime activities...eggs, baby animals and gardening.

Charlie, Colin, Brett, Luke W. and Ella were our last Superstars. Thank you for being so patient and for always making all of our other Superstars feel so special...you guys truly are Superstars!

May's themes will begin with farm and Mother's Day. Then we move on to butterflies and other insects. We enjoy watching our caterpillars grow daily – both our grass and real ones! Next, we'll look at the characteristics of some animal groups – amphibians, reptiles and mammals. Finally, we wrap up May with some zoo fun!

On Friday, June 4 we will go on our last fieldtrip to visit the Little Farm in Tilden's nature area. We will be leaving around 9:30 a.m. and returning at noon.

In June, besides driving your children crazy with repeated graduation practices, we'll be focusing on ocean life and, of course, Father's Day!

T-K GRADUATION WILL BE HELD ON THURSDAY EVENING, JUNE 10 from 5:30 to 6:30. The big event is being held at the Lafayette Veteran's Hall. We've just begun to practice our songs and your children are very excited about the whole thing! More graduation details will become available, as we get closer to the big event!
PLEASE LET US KNOW IF YOUR CHILD WILL BE UNABLE TO ATTEND GRADUATION!

As this is our last newsletter and Gina and I are getting a little sad, we want to tell you what a wonderful year your children have given us. We've had so much fun and gotten to know each other so well...we've become a real family.

Our closeness shows in the way we all know each other so well...

We all know that...

Luke D. loves a good teasing!

Meghan is the class fashionista!

Logan is our basketball MVP!

Ella is the most enthusiastic storyteller!

Grady knocks us over the most on the playground!

Ryan loves to pull pranks!

Lauren is the class heartthrob!

Luke W.'s mantra is "Don't worry, be happy!"

Brett is always the family puppy when we play house!

Josie is the avoids girl drama at all costs!

Liesel is the first to try anything new!

John receives the most love letters!

Rome has the most creative imagination!

Colin has the sweetest manners!

Grace is the most dramatic!

Charlie is the classroom organizer- especially pushing in the chairs!

Anneliese cannot be intimidated!

Grant is the mellowest!

Justin gives the BEST hugs!

Gina and I also want to take this opportunity to tell all you parents how wonderful you are...your incredible support, generosity, thoughtfulness and

friendship have meant so much to us and we can't begin to tell you how much we've appreciated you...but thank you mostly for sharing your beautiful children with us. We'll miss you.

Terri and Gina