

BUILDING BLOCKS



January 2018



FROM THE DIRECTOR'S CHAIR: by: Maria Marino

THANK YOU!

Thank you all for the delicious treats that were sent in during the holiday season. The entire staff enjoyed all the goodies and gifts. I hope you all enjoyed the holidays as much as we did.

YEAR END TAX STATEMENT:

If you need a year-end tax receipt for your records, you may visit tuitionexpress.com and log in using your ID number. If you cannot log in or would prefer that we print a receipt for you, just let us know.

OUTDOOR PLAY DAYS:

Occasionally each classroom (excluding infants) will schedule outdoor play days. Check your child's calendar to see when their class will be going outside. Please know that we will not take the children out if the temperature goes below 32 degrees. Be sure to send appropriate clothing - snow pants, hats, boots, and mittens.

BUILDING BLOCKS JANUARY ANNIVERSARIES:

Casey Starr – 8 years

Thank you for the many years of loyal service

PLANNING FOR PRESCHOOL:

All three year old parents are invited to come and visit Courtney Miller, our four year old teacher, as she describes the experience your child will have next year in our four year old program.

Courtney will be available to answer any questions you may have about your child's preschool year and their transition into Kindergarten.

Mark your calendar: **Monday, March 12th from 5:30 – 6:30 p.m.**

Look for more information in your email soon!

A NOTE FROM THE NURSE: by: Linda Thoman, RN

Happy New Year everyone! Thank you for all the delicious treats over the past month. It will definitely be difficult to stop snacking and eat healthier food now.

According to the news, flu season appears to be upon us. Posted on the bulletin board is a flu information fact sheet; more information can be found online at www.cdc.gov/flu. Also, hand washing, covering coughs and sneezes, and avoiding people who are sick are a few ways to

remain healthier this winter. Stay warm!



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LETTERS FROM LULLABY LAND: Infants - by Michelle Mikita

Welcome to 2018! We have so much to look forward to this year in Lullaby Land. Lots of singing, playing, reading stories, rolling over, teething, spitting up and diapers, diapers and more diapers.

Speaking of rolling over, Myles is doing a great job at it. He is also doing great at eating off a spoon. Gotta love baby cereal.

Our big kids Riley, Eddie, Gunnar and Connor are everywhere. They are crawling and pulling themselves up on everything. They are getting very brave and very adventurous. Gabriella and Gionni are my crawlers. My little ones, Mishay and Nicole are just as sweet as can be and growing so fast.

Just a New Year's reminder to please label, label, label, all bottles, binkies, bibs, blankets, car seats, bags and anything else that enters the Infant Room from home.

One last note of thanks to all the families that thought of us this holiday season!

FUN WITH ONES: One Year Olds - by Jodi Jackson

Seasons Greetings from the one year olds. December was a blast. My little elves did so many fun projects and they loved singing and dancing their way through the holidays. Those little elves of mine really enjoyed our Polar Express Day too. I enjoyed snuggling with them in my pajamas. We celebrated St. Nicholas Day, St. Lucia's Day, Hanukkah, Los Posadas and Christmas. One of our favorite projects was making a menorah using our hands. What fun to was painting everyone's hand blue.

We have been really focusing on recognizing and signing the colors; blue, red, green, yellow, orange, brown, black and white. My little elves seem to favor the color yellow. I love how they pronounce the word "yellow". Too cute. Thank you all for the wonderful gifts and treats we received this year. I hope everyone has a healthy happy and safe new year.

January is going to be filled with learning more sign language, more sensory games, lots of hands-on fun projects and much, much more. I'm excited about spending more time with my winter babies.



TWOS NEWS: Two Year Olds - by Casey Starr

Time sure does fly when you're having fun. December seemed to go by in the blink of an eye. All of the children really enjoyed celebrating the different holidays and doing fun winter projects. We started off the month decorating our room, building a No-Snow Snowman and seeing what St. Nicholas left in our shoes. Audrey, Harper and Mackenzie loved helping us decorate the room with pretty holiday decorations. Mackenzie pointed out the Grinch to all of her friends while Audrey danced all around with Harper when the holiday music came on. Making our No-Snow Snowman was Nicholas, Lily, Jayden and Zahara's favorite part about this month. They were all smiles when crumpling up the newspaper pages to put into the bags. They made sure to fill each bag to the very top.

We ended the month reading winter books, getting a visit from Santa Claus and singing some holiday songs. Evelyn and Niko were very excited to read the book, Sneezzy the Snowman. Every time he sneezed Niko pretended to sneeze while Evelyn always made sure to say, "God Bless you!" All of the children were so excited for Santa's visit. When he came into the classroom, Jaxson was one of only a few children to sit on his lap. Abby observed him from a distance. Singing holiday songs was everyone's favorite. Orla and Alonna suggested we sing Jingle Bells which was a big hit. They all keep singing it to this day. We would like to welcome our new friend Domenico to our class.

Thank you to all the families that thought of us this holiday season with your generous gifts. We can't wait to see what fun we will be having next month.



As we say goodbye to 2017, I cannot help but reflect on how much the children have grown over the past few months. It has been a real joy to have taught every single child. While I say goodbye to some of my friends who are moving over to Miss Olivia, let's first take a look back at December where we learned Traditions Around the World.

We started off the month getting ready for winter with learning about our first holiday, St. Nicholas Day. There was so much excitement as all the kids waited to see what they would receive from St. Nicholas. Greyson was first in line to get his shoe and when he saw the candy cane, a huge smile swept across his face. It was priceless.

This month we also made sure to add in some fun winter activities. When it came time to create our gingerbread men, Carter was very careful to get just the right amount of beads by counting all of them before gluing. Kinley wanted hers to have all the different color beads, but I really think it was the story of the gingerbread man that seemed to get all of the children excited that day. Jaquel kept talking about that sneaky fox.

The second week of our holiday traditions we spent learning all about Hanukkah. Max helped count the candles on our menorah every day. Then we took on a different spin with the traditional driedel game. We created ours out of marshmallows, pretzel sticks, and Hershey kisses. Skyler did a great job following directions putting all of the pieces together and she really enjoyed taking a big bite out of her Hershey kiss when she was all done.

Christmas, Kwanzaa and New Years were our last holidays and these seemed to be the most exciting ones for everyone. When it came time to create our holiday wish list Annabelle was so excited to tell me that she wanted a baby doll from Santa Claus. Paloma said she wanted walkie talkies. A big thank you to Emily who brought in pizza for our holiday party. All of her friends ate up everything! Also a big thank you to Paloma who brought in a toy to share for Kwanzaa. She did a wonderful job sharing her doggie with her friends.

I hope everyone had a great New Year, because I know that we did getting ready for it. Jackson was my big helper when it came time to making our fireworks in the bottle. He was so good at holding onto the food coloring and my directions on when to squeeze it into the bottle. He also loved watching the food coloring mix with the oil and told me "Look at all of the colors".

We had an exciting month not only learning about all different Traditions but also getting ready for our holiday pageant. The children did so well preparing for it and everyday they got excited to sing their songs. I was so happy to see how well the class did that day, I know with all of the excitement of Santa Claus and seeing their mommies and daddies, it could have been a lot for them, but they rose to the occasion. I am so proud of each and every one of them!

As I say goodbye to 2017 and welcome a whole new class into our Two Plus room it has been a real joy to have had the opportunity to get to know and teach your children. I know that they will excel in Miss Olivia's class.

As I welcome all of my new friends along with Annabelle, Skyler, and Autumn I wanted to let everyone know about all of the exciting things we will be focusing on and learning. We are going to continue learning our colors, shapes, and number recognition as well as counting. In addition, we will work on pre-writing and pre-cutting skills by tracing and ripping. Of course we will incorporate science, large motor, following directions, taking turns and cooking. We have a big month ahead of us and I cannot wait to see what it will bring! Have a great January.





NEWS PLEASE FROM THREES: by Olivia DeNatale

My name is Olivia DeNatale and as most of you know I will be stepping in for Jenn Trujillo. I have been part of the Building Blocks staff for 2 years. A little bit about myself, I am also a part of the Take Me Home Pet Rescue. We save dogs from high kill shelters and place them in their forever home. The 2 years that I spent working at Building Blocks, I assisted the teachers in the three year old classroom. I am presently in college taking education classes at SUNY Orange. I will be transferring to SUNY New Paltz to pursue Early Childhood Education. I feel very confident that my new position as lead teacher will be a great fit.

The month of December really flew by. We started off the month preparing for Christmas as the children enjoyed making beautiful holiday bells. Madison and Sophia really enjoyed decorating their bells with different colored glitter. All of the children worked hard to make sure their bells were perfect for their parents. Along with their bells, we also made handprint wreaths. Miles loved this the most. He always laughs hysterically when getting his hand painted. He said, "The paint feels weird and it tickles too much."

The following week we learned all about Hanukkah. The kids really liked making the Menorah. Ryan and Justin loved counting the candles and putting a new candle up for each day of Hanukkah. Throughout these two weeks, we also prepared for our holiday pageant. I hope you all enjoyed our little show. Olivia really enjoyed yelling out the words to Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer as loud as she could.

Polar Express day was so much fun. All the kids loved being in their pajamas, drinking hot chocolate and enjoying some homemade cookies. Everyone got to feel the excitement of the Polar Express as they shook their bells and listened carefully. That day we all heard the bells ringing and truly believed in the magic of Christmas. Later in the week we all gathered around the table and read the tale about Reindeer Dust. Giana was most interested in the story and couldn't wait to help make some reindeer dust of her own.

As we prepared to kick off the New Year, we practiced cutting and ripping up tissue paper to make some colorful confetti. Harper jumped right in grabbing four pieces at a time and ripping them apart. Then we joined Miss Courtney and Miss Sarah's class in the hallway for our New Years Eve countdown. ...3,2,1 and up went all that colorful confetti.

I would like to say a special good bye to all our fiends moving up to the preschool room. In their place I'd like to welcome all the new friends that have come to join our class. I'm grateful for the opportunity to teach such wonderful children. I'm very excited to see what the new year holds.



SARAH'S THREE PLUS: by Sarah Betty



The holidays are over and we had a great month of celebrating, but we are excited to get back to our routine. Thank you for thinking of me this past holiday season with your thoughtful and generous gifts.

December was an exciting month for our class as we kicked off the holiday season. We had so much fun in the classroom learning about all the holiday traditions in our families. Austin's favorite tradition is baking cookies. We also talked about putting up our Christmas trees and decorating our houses inside and out. A very special visitor that came in our class this month was our classroom Elf on the Shelf! She magically appeared after we all wrote Santa a letter asking for our very own elf. We had to give her a name, so we had a vote. Each name had a color associated with it as the kids cast their ballot. Red, Blue, Green and when I needed one last color to put on the board, I chose orange. Jayden said to me "Orange, that's ridiculous!" His humor puts a smile on our face and keeps us all laughing. The majority of our friends voted on the name "Chippy" and we loved watching all of the silly things she would do while we were away.

During the month of December we also had a chance to travel the world and learn about different holidays celebrated in different cultures. We packed our bags, got on an airplane and traveled to Sweden where we celebrated St Lucia day. We traveled to Mexico for Las Posadas, and then back to the USA for Kwanzaa, Hanukkah, and Christmas. As we visited each country we made sure to get our passports stamped and we made a special project for each holiday as well.

One of the most exciting days we had this month was our Polar Express Day! We all came to school in our pajamas and took a ride on the magical Polar Express! Laura Betty recreated the story of the polar express to our friends for both the preschool and Three year old class. We had our tickets punched, boarded the train and even received hot chocolate and cookies. Victor was so excited to listen to the polar express music and gave all sorts of spoilers as we watched some of the movie too!

I also want to extend a very warm thank you to all of the families for coming out to support the children as they performed their Christmas pageant for you. We had a lot of fun learning and practicing our Christmas songs this month and we were very grateful to see so many faces at our pageant. Steven and Allie did such a fabulous job learning the sign language to the song, Santa Claus is Coming to Town. Cole M. and Na'Layah loved to belt out their tunes for us as we practiced Frosty the Snowman. And Samantha brightened our room with her smile as we danced to Jingle Bell Rock.

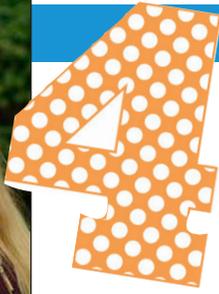
We also made sure, as it got closer to Christmas, to write a letter to Santa on what toys we would love to receive. Connor made sure to ask for his trains and Eli made sure to sign his name on his letter.

Near the month's end we talked about things like hibernation and even did some science experiments with real snow. Aaliyah loved making her snowman look perfect, even if he was all melty.

We had a lot of fun in December and are looking forward to some new and exciting adventures in January as we do our first study on Buildings! We will learn all about what buildings are made of, who works on them and even talk about some famous buildings around the world.

I'd like to take this opportunity to welcome some new friends moving into the Three-Plus program; Welcome Miles, Giana, Justin, Sophia, and Ryan! Happy New Year everyone and here's to a great January!





COURTNEY'S FOURS: by Courtney Miller

Goodbye 2017, Hello 2018. With the new year starting, I thought about how thankful I am to have your amazing kids in my class. They bring joy and laughter into my day.

The month of December has been a joyous and cheerful month. Throughout the month our friends explored all things holiday. We started our holiday celebrations by talking about traditions, beginning with St. Nicholas Day. Lily was especially excited for St. Nicholas Day because she spent the morning asking when it was nap time so she could put her shoes in the hallway to wait for St. Nicholas to bring her a treat. Next my friends hopped on a plane and traveled around the world for the holidays. Chase and Nickolas loved celebrating Kwanzaa and making a big mkeka mat. JP was a little nervous about performing at our annual Holiday Pageant but when show day arrived he was singing his heart out.

To kick off We Believe week we all hopped on the Polar Express in our pajamas. Cole V. loved getting his ticket punched and drinking yummy hot chocolate. All of our friends loved hearing the story of the Polar Express and enjoying a fun and special ride on our very own Building Blocks Express. Kristian was very excited to write his letter to Santa asking him for all the goodies he wanted.

We wrapped up our month with all things snow. We learned about what happens when a snowman is left in the sun for too long. Tristyn was our snowman monitor. He was in charge of watching our snowmen and seeing when they started to melt. While we learned about snow, we also talked about hibernation. Nicholas was deciding whether a raccoon hibernates or flies south. He said, "Raccoons can fly with their jetpack." What a great way to wrap up a fantastic month. Thank you to everyone who made sure to remember us this holiday with so many wonderful gifts and treats.

With January upon us, I would like to welcome Jayden, Samantha, Aaliyah, Na'layah and Alessandra into my class. We are going to have so much fun learning new and exciting things starting with building, how to build and what materials you need to make a skyscraper.



Babysitting Form *for Friday, February 2, 2018*

Child's Name: _____

Parent/Guardian Contact Numbers: (1) _____

(2) _____

Please watch for a babysitting list which will be printed and posted at the Parent Bulletin Board by the entrance door at the beginning of the week.



FROM THE EDITOR'S POINT OF VIEW: *by: Laura Betty*

As we bid a fond farewell to another year gone by, this is that time when everyone starts off the year by ending the season of giving. While most of the world is tossing out their worn out evergreens and boxing up all their tidings of good cheer, there is still the unsung celebration commonly referred to as The 12 days of Christmas. The excitement builds to a climax on the morning of December 25, and then it stops, abruptly. Christmas is over, the New Year begins, and people go back to their normal lives. As we all head into 2018, traditionally we start a new diet plan, a new exercise regime and a promise to bring order back to those drawers, closets

and cabinets. I'd like to humbly say that while we all hurried the holiday in, we are now rushing the holiday out the door without paying mind to the reason for giving. For a brief moment, just sit down and listen to one of the oldest stories told of a child that was born. And on that day, kings from far away saw a star. They followed that star until they came into the town of Bethlehem. They brought gifts to lay before the child. Gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh to represent the life this child would soon lead. They were known as the three Magi, the wisest of all the kings.

While we busy ourselves preparing and providing and believing in the magic of Christmas, we forget that the magic came with the arrival of the three wise men. Their arrival brought a sense of worth to an otherwise normal way of life. And it was because of their wisdom that the 12 days of Christmas originated.

Children bring so much joy to our lives on Christmas morning. Their wide-eyed anticipations of that one special gift making it under the Christmas tree is what we, as parents hope to see. All month long they try their best not to be naughty, hoping that their infamous elf on the shelf didn't see or catch them doing, eating or saying something they shouldn't. We saturate our homes and our lives with everything Christmas, starting only days after Thanksgiving, so that by the time January 1st comes along, we are ready to pack all that yuletide gay up and go back to the normalcy of life. But the kings weren't rushing to their destination so that they could come to the end of their journey. They rushed to the child so that they could see for themselves this new life that would bring a change that so many were looking for. Their journey was just beginning for them. Two thousand and eighteen years later we are all still anticipating and hoping for some kind of change. We are all starting our own journey toward the infamous star. And inevitably it always seems to start after Christmas. Like the three wise men, we also chase after the hopes of change. We are chasing the hope of being thinner, smarter, wealthier, kinder, and the list goes on. Without sounding preachy, or have I already passed that mark, I'd like to take this opportunity to say that Christmas is the most wonderful time of the year. But let's not forget that as we ring in another new year, it's because of the oldest story ever told that we draw inspiration to rewrite our own story. Don't let your journey end just because of some arbitrary date on the calendar. Just because the Times Square ball dropped and the evergreens are lined up in the trash cans, don't forget the meaning behind the giving. As I step off my soap box and head into the new year, I'll be sure not to pack up my three ceramic wise men until the 12th day of Christmas.

