



# Newsletter

## Spring

### 2013



#### Connecting With Nature

Studies abound on the physical and psychological importance of providing children with regular opportunities to directly experience nature. Researchers tell us that human beings are hard-wired to make connections with the flora and fauna around them. Scientists are raising valid concerns about the health and well-being of the first generation of children who are spending a large portion of their lives indoors—they are learning about the world through multimedia rather than through direct exposure to the natural environment. Research is proving that a connection to nature is essential for physical health, reduction in stress, development of self efficacy, improved intra-personal relationships and developing an understanding of the importance of stewardship.

Reading the research makes me especially grateful to be working at Fairville where outdoor exploration and spontaneous observation of the natural world occur with regularity. We have only been back at school for nine days following our spring break, but those nine days have included many wonderful moments of experiencing or observing nature at work:

- Judy found a rabbit's nest in the middle of her kitchen garden and we all watched the baby bunnies grow large enough to leave the nest.
- Jon Wolf was working in the play yards and called us outside to see a garter snake eating a frog! It was amazing to see the big bulge in the snake's body and then watch the snake's muscles contract as it moved the frog further down its digestive tract.
- Celia Goodall brought two baby lambs to the campus for the children to observe and pet. The interaction seemed to calm the lambs—and the children!
- Children noticed a greater variety of birds and listened to many bird calls on the play yards this month.
- We have all been tilling garden beds, planting seeds, watching the trees bud and noticing the spring bulbs begin to flower.

I am thankful every day for the opportunities I have to interact with nature and for those special moments I get to spend with your children as they experience the miracles of our world. Thank you for giving your children those important, daily opportunities to connect with nature!

Warmly,  
Sharon



Young Rabbit in Judy's Kitchen Garden



Snake eating a frog (arrow points to frog's eye)



Children petting a lamb—thanks, Celia!

## All School Chick Study

During the last two weeks of March the whole school studied the life cycle of chickens. We began our study by reading fiction and non-fiction books about chicks and learning some chick songs and poems as we awaited the arrival of farmer Eric and his chicken eggs. Eric explained that the chicken eggs were NOT the same as the ones we get at the store because there were baby chicks growing inside them. They needed to be kept warm (99.5 degrees). Our job was to make sure the incubator was plugged in and that the eggs were turned each day. Amy and Meaghan volunteered to be our "chief egg tenders" and were in charge of turning the eggs, adding water to the incubator and keeping everything clean.

As the weekend approached, some of our eggs started to jiggle! Several classes made predictions regarding which egg would hatch first, but not a single child chose egg # 11, our first to hatch. This year all of the chicks hatched on Sunday

evening so we came in on Monday morning to an incubator filled with twelve very tired and wet little chicks. By late Monday morning, all 12 chicks were dry enough to move into the brooder box. Once in the box, Amy taught the chicks how to find food and water. Then we got to hold them!

The children in the Tuesday/Thursday classes came to school to find the brooder box filled with fluffy, yellow peeping chicks! We all watched a video of our 2012 chicks hatching (since we missed this year's hatch). Each class had the opportunity to visit with the chicks in the Meeting room or have a couple of chicks visit in their classroom. Observations were made and recorded and a variety of artwork, sculptures and plays were created in honor of the chicks. It was such a pleasure to see the work made by the children. The chicks inspired everyone to create beautiful paintings and drawings!



### Events Calendar

April 19	School Closed–Fun Fair Work Day
April 20	Fun Fair 11 am to 3 pm (Rain Date Sunday, April 21)
May 9th and 10th	Grandparent’s and Special Friends Days
May 15th	Volunteer Breakfast 9:15 am
May 24	Last Day of Classes
May 30	Fairville Art Show (Rain Date Friday, May 31)



**CAMP  
AKA MAKKA**  
FAIRVILLE FRIENDS

### Join us for Summer Camp

This year we are offering camp for children ages 3 through 7 for 8 weeks of the summer, from June 3rd to July 26th. Camp runs from 9:00 am to 12:00 pm each weekday. Campers can register for either 3 (TWTh) or 5 (M-F) days per week for a cost of \$150 (TWTh) or \$200 (M-F) per week. 20% sibling discounts are available. Pay for 3 weeks, get \$25 off each additional week.

Camp brochures and registration forms were sent home with your child in February. Extra registration forms are available on our website or in the office. Share a camp brochure with your friends and neighbors--camp Aka Maka is open to the public!

### In the Classrooms.....



Something very fishy has been happening in the AM Ladybug room since the class returned from spring break! I noticed fish swimming on the window to the porch and several popular fish books on the shelves. The class read Swimmy, Five Little Sharks Swimming in the Sea, Sea Horse, Over in the Ocean, Flossie Flounder and other titles. They learned fish poems and used the fish theme to practice counting, sorting and color identification. Of course they played with fish in the water table, too, and created beautiful ocean-themed works of art.

The PM Ladybugs are interested in birds! The baby chicks hatching inspired us to read about all different types of birds and paint with feathers. At our small afternoon Meeting for Worship, we also read a book about a bird making the decision to leave its nest and try to fly, then we talked about being brave and trying new things! The PM Ladybugs are enjoying bringing down the silence and there are times when their teachers don't even want it to end for it's so quiet, peaceful, and calming.

### School Openings Available for Fall 2013

Fairville has select classroom openings available for the fall. Parents are our best marketing tool--please tell your friends and neighbors about Fairville Friends!

Thank You!

### ANNUAL GIVING

Like all independent schools, we depend on donors to bridge the gap between the tuition we charge and the actual cost of operating the school. Our ability to secure grants to support the school is also tied directly to the percentage of participation we receive from the members of our community. Every gift, large and small, is important to us.

Donate online:

<http://www.fairvillefriends.org/support/>. Or, drop off a check at the office. Thanks!

## In the Classrooms.....continued



The Bumblebees returned from break ready to share the fun they had while they were away—and more than ready for spring! They matched spring flower colors and shapes, read Spring is Here, Everything Spring, and Bear Wants More and other titles. They painted with watercolors and created beautiful butterflies. Then they moved on to talk about critters of spring such as ducks, caterpillars, and bugs. I'm sure we'll see many of those critters on the playground as the warmer weather arrives!



The Fireflies are ornithologists! They have gone on many birding walks, found beautiful feathers and learned many different bird calls. They read about different types of birds and created their own paper bird collages. A lovebird visited the classroom and all the Fireflies loved having a class pet for a few weeks. The children had a hands on experience with different types of bird nests and discovered how skilled birds really are, as we tried to build our own nests with mud, twigs, grass and pine needles. The Fireflies are currently building a birdhouse with real tools. They used a saw to cut pieces, smoothed the wood with sandpaper, and are hammering the bird house together. The Fireflies will need to decide where to hang the birdhouse, and there may be 16 different opinions...Yikes!



The Grasshopper class returned from break to find an aquarium filled with frog spawn! They had an opportunity to observe the eggs for about a week before they hatched into tiny tadpoles. Some of the tadpoles were released into the pond and some were kept in the classroom aquarium so the children can observe their growth and development. Since the teachers are not certain what type of frogs they collected (they think they are leopard frogs) the date when the tadpoles will become fully developed frogs is a bit of a mystery. The class has been reading non-fiction frog books and a variety of froggy fiction. They are doing frog artwork, playing games and waiting patiently to see the tadpoles change and grow—hopefully fully formed frogs will be hopping about before the end of the school year!



The Butterflies are on the move! Since returning from spring break they have been engaged in a study of transportation. They read a variety of transportation books, made Fairville taxis, and designed and built their own cardboard cars. They are also planning science activities such as making and flying "helicopters", making foil boats and then seeing how many pennies they will hold before sinking, and making and testing different types of ramps to see which ones are fastest. Modes of transportation around the world, and games (e.g. red light, green light, the parking lot game) are also being explored.



The Kindergarten students are learning all about wild rabbits (like the Eastern cottontails we observed in Judy's garden) and pet rabbits (like Oscar). They are reading non-fiction rabbit books to compare and contrast wild/pet rabbits and are listening to a fictional chapter book about the adventures of a toy rabbit (The Miraculous Journey of Edward Tulane). The class is observing Oscar (in his hutch and as he moves about the K classroom) and recording their observations in their science journals. This month the K class is also planting seeds, learning how seeds form and grow, and working in their class garden bed. They are also busy planning a garden mural with Judy that will eventually be painted on the wall of the dining room. If all goes well, you should be able to see it near the end of the school year!