



Vol. 38, No.3



Epiphany Community Nursery School



Spring 2015

We were definitely keeping our spirits high in this endlessly snowy winter. This spell has helped the teachers be even more ingenious in doing large motor activities with the children. There have been lots of walks, marching, obstacle courses, limbo, hopscotch and even Twister! As a welcome diversion, the Twos and the Fours were lucky enough to have magical Lion Dancers for Chinese New Year to increase our chances for a year of prosperity.

I recently heard about a 9 year-old boy named Tyler who has started a foundation for kids to have their families donate to, instead of getting gifts, for birthdays. It's called Birthdayback and began with Tyler's wish to help families after Hurricane Sandy – what a great lesson in paying it forward, take a look at this site ([www.birthdayback.com](http://www.birthdayback.com)).

And, sitting at lunch with the 4/5s, I remarked, "Luna, what a sumptuous looking lunch!" The response? "Wendy, food is my life!" And there you have it, Martha Stewart look out!

May the Yankees stay healthy and actually gel and may we be greeted by sunny days and warm temperatures after this brutal winter. On a personal note, my first grandchild, Blake Ella Levey, was born on February 22<sup>nd</sup>, right on her due date! She is a happy, healthy, beautiful little girl and we couldn't be more thrilled!

Here's to spring and baby girls,

Wendy-



## Did you know...



...that Shevaun O'Mara, assistant teacher in Four/Fives, had always wanted to be a teacher? (Actually, for a short period of time, when she was very little, she had wanted to be a hairdresser.)

Shevaun is relatively new to our city. She grew up in Nantucket, went to college in Florida and then came to New York to work in marketing. In the few years that she worked in marketing, Shevaun also earned a teaching certification for Montessori schools. Armed with that certification she moved to Boston to finally do what she had always wanted to do - teach.

New York lured Shevaun and her fiancé back just last year, just in time to avoid Boston's 100 inches of snow this winter. She is thrilled that she found ECNS through a friend; she is having so much fun with the Four/Fives. She loves that the children speak and act with little to no inhibitions. She never knows what to expect when she comes to school!

Shevaun plans to go back to school to get her Master's in education but in the meantime she enjoys being in New York, practicing yoga, hiking in the great outdoors and of course, her job. The children make Shevaun very happy that she didn't choose the hairdresser road.

## Mark Your Calendars

**Mar. 23 -27** ECNS closed for Spring Break

**Mar. 30** Staff return,  
ECNS Community Service Day

**Mar. 31** Children return to school

**Apr. 3** ECNS closed for Good Friday

**Apr. 14** Ladies Luncheon

**Apr. 29** Family Fun Night (5:30-8pm)

**Apr. 30** No school for Y2s  
(Parent-Teacher Conference)

**May 1** No school for all children  
(Parent-Teacher Conference)

**May 8** Ongoing school meeting  
(8:30-10:30)  
3s Mothers' Day (10:30-12)

**May 11** 4s Mothers Day (10:30-12)

**May 12** Babysitters Breakfast

**May 19** Buddy Breakfast

**May 25** ECNS closed for Memorial Day

**May 26** Twos End of Year Picnic

**May 27** Threes End of Year Picnic

**May 28** Fours and Four/Fives  
Moving-on Ceremony at All Soul's

# Fours

Health and Safety have been the main area of concentration in the Fours since returning from our December break. We began with Safety and a few of its many components- Home Safety, Street/Outside Safety and Fire Safety. We looked at many safety scenarios, some the children might have encountered before, and others they might not have. We discussed questions such as, "Why should you wear a life preserver in a boat even if you know how to swim," and "Why should you never go in an elevator when there is any kind of emergency?" We also learned a little about the story behind Smokey the Bear, and how he lived through a forest fire, and how he came to be one of the important representatives for teaching about fire safety.

Our Health unit focused first on learning about our bodies and then how to take care of them. We learned a bit about some of our organs such as the brain, the heart, the lungs, the stomach and intestines. We learned about the important jobs they do and what they need to be healthy. We were lucky this year to have a visit from ECNS' dentist friend, Dr. C., when we talked about our teeth. She showed us the important job that teeth do and why we need to take care of them. She brought along her stuffed animal helper, Freddy (who has a full set a rather large teeth), and let each child have a turn with practicing brushing. She reminded us that drinking water and brushing twice a day (and after you eat sweets, are the best things we can remember to do for our teeth!

We even cooked some healthy food for this unit. We made lots and lots of whole wheat bread, four batches for snack and a little loaf for each child to take home. We also made yummy and healthy granola cereal, and squeezed our own orange juice! (This has lots of vitamin C and is good in helping to fight off colds!)

To encourage and acknowledge healthful eating, we also began a huge wall graph to keep track of what fruit or vegetable each child had eaten at snack time. We kept track of 15 different fruits and vegetables and it was fun to see the children really keeping track and excited about what the next food item would be.

Chinese New Year was extra special this year as we, the Four/Fives and the Twos were all able to view a special Lion Dance performance, thanks to Sophie Lin's dad who arranged it. The children loved it and were truly amazed to see how the two people who were inside the giant lion really work together to make it move as one!

We have now begun our Community Animal study and are looking forward to welcome in the warm weather and spring holidays.

~Liza, Alexis and Danielle





# Four/Fives

Since it has been the coldest winter on record, we made our classroom look like a winter wonderland with the help of the Four/Fives. At the start of winter we practiced our cutting skills making snowflakes to decorate the room. As the weeks progressed so did the intricacy of the snowflakes! For more cutting, the children cut three differently sized circles to make their own snowperson. Once they were glued down, every child decorated his snowperson with a personality of its own.

As cold as the winter has been outside the Four/Fives have kept their energy up. We made the most of each and every snowstorm! While most classes didn't want to brave the weather, we embraced it and used it as a learning experience. We pushed wagons filled with ice and snow to build snowmen, created ice factories and even pretended to sit by a campfire made of ice block logs.

All the cutting we did preparing our classroom for the winter months prepared the children well for cutting hearts to make valentines. Since Valentine's Day is all about love, we made a family mobile with a picture of the child on one side and their family on the other. We made tissue filled hearts and adorable "Bee Mine" bumble bees to decorate the Valentine's Hop. As always the Valentine's Hop was a very special night and we all had a blast dancing the night away together!

After Valentine's Day we moved onto another very special holiday and learned all about Chinese New Year. We learned this year is the year of the sheep, red is a lucky color in the Chinese culture, and that they do a dragon dance to help bring in the New Year. We were SOO lucky to see a live Lion Dance, thanks to the Lin family. Getting to participate in the Lion Dance was an amazing experience the children will not forget. Then we came back to our room to dumplings from the Black family. We love celebrating other cultures and learning new things!

We then switched continents and studied about 17 types of penguins that inhabit the Antarctic. We started with a "KWL" chart, which is what I KNOW/think I know, what I WANT to know, and what I LEARNED. To our surprise, the children knew many interesting facts about penguins (and thought they knew a lot more). Once we read a few books on penguins and recorded our information we went back to the information we thought we knew and did some editing and correcting. Fun facts, a group of penguins is called a rookery and that the father protects the egg while the mother goes out to get food for when the chick hatches. We made a true to size Little Blue penguin and an Emperor penguin, both are on display in the room. The children each chose from Macaroni, Emperor, Little Blue, Yellow Eyed, Rock-hopper or Adelie to write about. They wrote and illustrated three facts about the penguin and then we created a class book.

As the months pass, it is becoming more apparent how special our Four/Fives are and how they are all maturing so nicely! We are all very proud of how far they have come, especially with their handwriting and drawing skills. We are now working on beginning and ending sounds, using pictures to help us identify words and taking "picture walks" to make story predictions.

We're looking forward to some more adventures with the Four/Fives and already getting sad just thinking about graduation!

~Meredith, Shevaun and Melissa



**OFFICE OF THE POLICE COMMISSIONER**  
 ONE POLICE PLAZA • ROOM 1400

**Deputy Commissioner of Administration**  
 New York City Police Department  
 One Police Plaza room 1407  
 New York, NY 10038

February 12, 2015

Epiphany Community Nursery School  
 510 East 74<sup>th</sup> street  
 New York, NY 10021

Dear Teachers and Students of Epiphany Community Nursery School,

Today, February 12, 2015, the Ramos and Liu families went to the Daily News building to personally receive your beautiful Valentine's Day cards. Both families were extremely touched by your kindness and the outpouring of love that was enclosed in the envelope.

I have enclosed a photo of the families with the big hearts. On behalf of Mrs. Ramos and Mrs. Liu I want to personally thank you for remembering Detective Rafael Ramos and Detective Wen Jian Lui at this time.

I hope you all had a LOVEly Valentine's Day!

*Cathleen Perez*  
 Deputy Commissioner

CP/jrw

March 4, 2015

Epiphany Community Nursery School  
 510 E. 74<sup>th</sup> St.  
 New York, NY 10021

Dear Epiphany Community Nursery School:

Recently, on February 12, 2015 you made a donation to our Veterans. On behalf of the James J. Pirox VA Medical Center we would like to thank you for your contribution.

Your donation of Valentine cards for veterans is greatly appreciated. This will assist the health of our veteran population in a special way.

Thank you for helping our important and deserving veterans. Please know that you have helped our veterans and we greatly appreciate your generosity.

Sincerely,  
*James J. Pirox*  
 Chief, Veterans Services

"Veterans have made a difference in our lives, thank you for making a difference in theirs"



Barbara Sampson (mom of Alexis '06) speaks at The Chapin School about forensic science. She is New York City's Chief Medical Examiner, the first woman to hold this position.

Dr. Jain (dad of Nikhil M3s, Tayjus '14) makes a house call to Middle Threes to talk about his job.



# P is for...

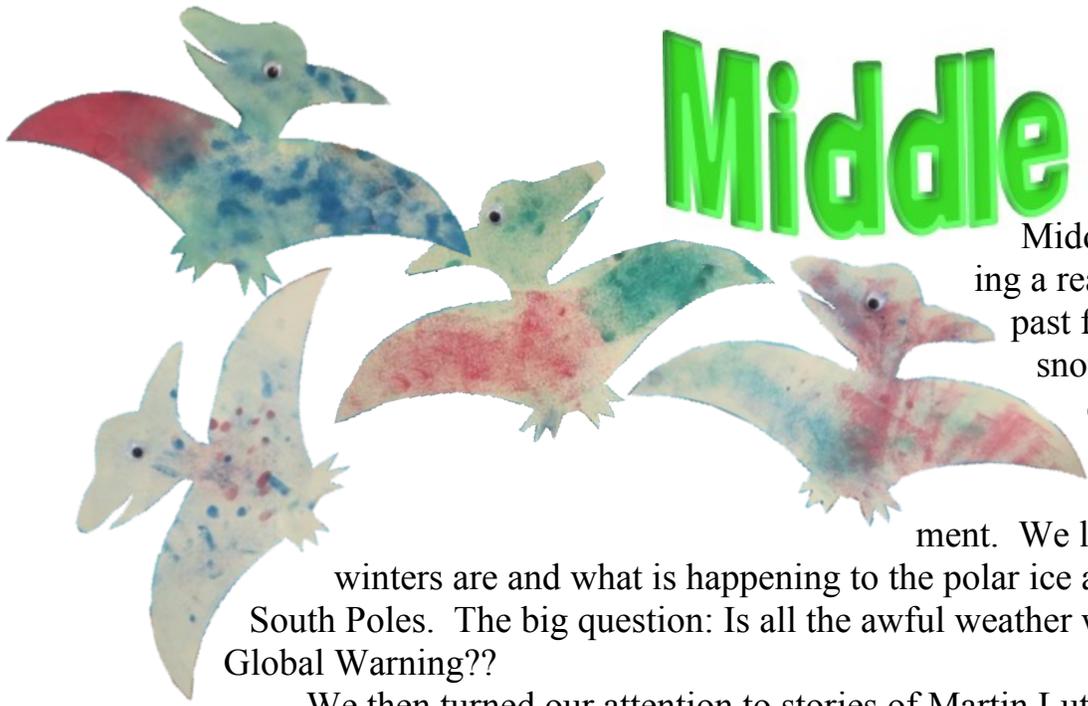






# ...Pajamas!!

# Middle Threes



Middle Threes have been having a really exciting time these past few months. With all the snowy weather outside, we decided to discuss Arctic and Antarctic animals, cold climate and environment. We learned how very long the

winters are and what is happening to the polar ice at both the North and the South Poles. The big question: Is all the awful weather we were having due to Global Warming??

We then turned our attention to stories of Martin Luther King Jr. We learned what it means to be kind to one another and how important it is for everyone to be accepting of differences and how all of us are similar as well.

On a lighter note, around St. Patrick's Day, a mischievous leprechaun (whom the children have named Little Green Guy) visited our classroom and made a mess of it. He loves our classroom so much that he and Shorty Pointy Toes have since visited us often causing more mayhem. We are hoping to catch him for good luck but if not, we have a great Blarney stone!

We had a very extensive dinosaur study. The children learned how big and long dinosaurs were and whether they were herbivores or carnivores and why. We learned that they came in different colors, sizes, and shapes. We had a great puppet show with our cute dinosaur puppets. We even dug for dinosaurs! The most exciting part was the volcano we made – it actually exploded!



Our next big topic was about our bodies, what our senses are for, what we need to do just to keep healthy and what we need to eat to grow big and strong. We've had many cooking projects to help us with this. Scones, sand and dinosaur eggs (oatmeal/jelly beans), pancakes and hamentashen were all big hits!

It has been a long time coming but spring has finally arrived. This being so, we will begin to discuss buds, bugs and all different types of flowers. We are planning to plant flower seeds and of course, celebrating spring holidays are also an important part of our curriculum.

We're looking forward to the next two months of school.  
-Linda, Caroline & Mekenzie



# Old Threes



Coming back from a wonderful winter break the Old 3s were eager to play with their friends and dive back into investigating the world around us. Boy, have we been busy!

After we explored all things winter, we learned about Martin Luther King Jr. and the importance of working together, celebrating one another's differences and the meaning of peace. A favorite book of ours was *The Crayon Box That Talked* by Shane Deroif. A child's crayons discover that even though they are all different, when they work together they create a beautiful picture. We enjoyed working together to create some of our own class pictures after reading this story. We also discussed different ways the Old 3s could show peace in their lives, such as "by drawing pictures for everybody I love," "by eating dinner with my family," and "by sharing my toys."

To continue the theme of cooperation, for our Outer Space unit, Old 3s loved working together to create our own solar system in the classroom. We are so proud that the children worked so hard while investigating the different planets, the order they are in from the sun, and what makes each one so unique.

What better way to share love and peace than creating valentines for our families and sharing special valentines with our friends?



Our most recent unit was Fairytales. "The Three Little Pigs" was a huge success! Again, the Old 3s worked together, to build a set and to act out the story. We loved taking turns being the audience and the actors. We even had to edit the story so it involved two wolves on some days! Another story we discovered was *The Little Red Hen* by Paul Galdone, which reinforced cooperation and helping one another throughout the school day.

We're looking forward to an exciting rest of the year!

~Becky, Phyllis, and Mariel





Chinese New Year Lion Dance!  
Thanks to the Lin Family  
(Sophie 4s, Ichiro M2/3s)



ECNS  
Valentine's Day  
Hop



# Young Threes



The Young Threes have been busy bees like usual! We just could not wait for spring to get here, so

that we could get back outside. While we haven't been able to get out onto the roof, we have enjoyed our community walks to breathe in fresh air. We also started our classroom jobs and the kids take them very seriously! Our favorite jobs at the moment seem to be snack helper, book collector and teacher's helper. They really take pride in doing their jobs!



Cooking has continued to be a favorite activity in our class. We have made many yummy treats and the majority of our friends love trying them! To help keep us warm during those cold winter days we made chicken soup with vegetables and some hot chocolate with marshmallows. We made pancakes to go along with the book If You Give a Pig a Pancake and muffins to go along with the book If You Give a Moose a Muffin. The kids really enjoyed the correlation between the book we were reading and our cooking project each week.



We did lots of great art projects this winter! Art is another favorite in our classroom and we take advantage to make as many projects as possible! We made ice skates, snowmen, snowflakes and lacing mittens just to name a few. But by the time the beginning of March came around we had had enough of winter and moved on to spring. We made bumble bees, flowers and butterflies to brighten up the classroom. Shapes have been a popular topic of this year and we have made different art projects with shape stickers and shape stamps. The kids love pointing out the different shapes that they recognize and the more they see them, the more they get to know!



Valentine's Day was lots of fun! We of course made beautiful art projects to make the classroom as festive as possible. Our stained glass hearts in the windows looked wonderful, as did our treat bags that we made to bring our special valentines home. We celebrated Valentine's Day by decorating sugar cookies with a few parents in the classroom, singing lots of songs and reading lots of books. We celebrated Chinese New Year by making fried rice, making pictures of dragons and all wearing red. For St Patrick's Day we made butter to go along with our Irish soda bread, all wore green and made colorful rainbows! We love celebrating holidays in the Young Threes!



Hope you have a wonderful Spring Break! Can't wait to hear all about it!

~Amelia,  
Inez and Jenn





# Michelle's Twos



It's hard to believe that it is already March! Our Twos have come so far since winter vacation and the past few months have been action packed. The children are having such a wonderful time working on all the skills they have been learning. They truly loved the introduction of the job chart; Line Leader, Sticker Picker and Goodbye Person seem to be the classroom favorites. We rotate our jobs weekly so each child has a turn to do each and every job.

We started off the New Year learning about winter. We talked about the weather and about activities



we enjoy doing during those cold months. We learned about animals that like living in snowy places, like penguins. We followed directions and learned positional words (on top, in the middle, under) when we made heart shaped penguins. Our little chefs helped peel and mash "Snowy Smashed Potatoes" and then they got to sprinkle on cheese (which looked a lot like snow!).

Following our winter unit we learned all about dinosaurs. We sang and marched to "We are the Dinosaurs" by the Laurie Berkner Band. We made our own dinosaur fossils by baking play dough with dinosaur imprints. We also trapped dinosaurs in ice and had fun making predictions about what would happen and how we could free the dinosaurs from the ice.

For Valentine's Day, we talked about the people we love and why. We worked together to make giant valentines and delivered them to Wendy, Carrie, Carly, Kathy, and Julie. We also learned that it is just as nice to give a gift or a card to someone else as it is to get one. Our "Pretty in Pink" drink made with strawberries, raspberries, bananas and yogurt was just perfect!



Chinese New Year was so exciting! We picked up pom-poms with chop sticks, which helped us to develop stronger fine motor skills, and jumped on bubble wrap which simulated the sound fire crackers make. We now know how to say "Happy New Year in Chinese: "Gung Hay Fat Choy". Daniel's mom taught us how to make sweet dumplings filled with chocolate. Thanks Annie!

We kicked off March with a unit on the five senses. In art we made binoculars out of paper towel rolls, and a touch collage using materials with different textures. In cooking we used our fine motor skills to squeeze lemons and make lemonade. We also popped popcorn and used our sense of hearing to listen to the kernels pop. We ended the week with a fun "show and smell".

We spent the remainder of March learning about nursery rhymes, a Twos Room favorite! We learned rhymes like "Hickory Dickory Dock", "Hey Diddle, Diddle" and "Humpty Dumpty". This unit is an excellent way to build the children's phonemic awareness, memorization, and rhyming skills. We also worked on our sequencing skills, using the felt board to help retell many of the rhymes we learned. We pretended to be "Jack Nimble" as we marched, crawled, tiptoed, and jumped over the candlestick. Our nursery rhymes inspired cooking projects included Humpty Dumpty scrambled eggs and Peter Piper quick pickles!

We've learned so much in just a few short months and there's much more to come!



~Michelle, Erica, and Chini



# Daniela's Twos



Our Twos have been busy from the start of the New Year, painting snowy pictures and icicle designs-an obvious prelude to what was to come! We learned about the Arctic polar bears and Antarctic emperor penguins. The children enjoyed roaring and ambling like bears in the classroom, creating puffy polar bear faces, making a bear cave and going on a "bear hunt".

February came along, and with it, the answer to the Twos' predictions. The children had made predictions, which we charted, as to whether or not the groundhog would see his shadow; he did. We fashioned red envelopes and banners to celebrate Chinese New Year. Our exploration of the New Year was further enhanced with a performance by lion dancers from Chinatown. A really spectacular demonstration! Our room seemed much warmer after we decorated it with red and pink hearts and love bugs for Valentine's Day. We not only gave each other valentines, but also our moms and dads who are so special. We enjoyed learning valentine rhymes, playing valentine counting games, and scouting for the Valentine with our name on it!

Marching March was full of activities. The children discovered how to mix new colors with marbles (and our fingers), made shamrocks, found lucky four leaf clovers and tried to find that leprechaun's pot o' gold!! Celebrating St. Patrick's Day was even more fun as we dressed in green and paraded through the halls of ECNS.



Our Cooking 101 class made many delicious dishes these past few weeks. Rice cake polar bears (with blueberries, pretzels and mini Oreos), hot chocolate, fried rice, pasta primavera, and fried zucchini. We also introduced the children to our Job Chart. Every week, each child gets a new job, Calendar Person, Snack Helper and Chair Pusher, just to name a few. The children are very excited and happy to do their job (for the most part 😊) and look forward to it.

It's hard to believe that the school year is almost over- o mamma mia! The Twos have grown so much these past few months and we look forward to all they have yet to accomplish!

~Daniela, Kathy and Leslie



# CARRIE'S

# CORNER

Happy spring!

To get us in the mood, this newsletter's illustration is the spring one from *Green Eyes* by Abe Birnbaum (originally a *Little Golden Book*).

As of the publishing of this newsletter, spring should officially be here bringing with it more pleasant weather and opportunities to do things outdoors.



Visit the Central Park or the Bronx Zoo. It's time for the baby animals to start arriving! While you're at it, join the New York Zoological Society. There are discounts and free exhibits and parking passes included. Take a short trip north to Wave Hill in Riverdale or The Greenburgh Nature Center. Become a member too. There are interesting programs throughout the year. They have redone the trails on the Bronx River Parkway, another short ride north.

There are also a few interesting things to do indoors. Read a spring selection (all part of our ECNS collection): *Spring is Here* by Lois Lenski

*Growing Vegetable Soup* by Lois Ehlert

*The Cloud Book* by Tomie dePaola

*First Comes Spring* and

*My Spring Robin* by Anne Rockwell

Watch the 50th anniversary version of *The Sound of Music*. Enough said! Go and see the *Radio City Spring Spectacular* (two years in the making!) Watch the new PBS special *50 Years of Peter, Paul, and Mary*. This features their influence on music, politics, and world issues. It also has an interesting perspective on their personal lives and their 7 year "hiatus". There are moving segments on the trio performing with Pete Seeger and speaking of his profound influence on them as well as their singing with all the surviving icons of folk music. Then there are the wonderful tributes at Mary Travers' memorial service (which Secretary John Kerry refers to as a "reunion of Nixon's 'enemy list'"). Many of you know I am a big Seeger/PPM fan. I have had the privilege and pleasure of seeing them in concert and joining their sing-a-longs. This documentary will not disappoint!

Enjoy your spring break!

Carrie