

A Child Becomes Office

From: A Child Becomes Preschool <office=achildbecomes.org@mail124.us2.mcsv.net> on behalf of A Child Becomes Preschool <office@achildbecomes.org>
Sent: Wednesday, February 29, 2012 4:24 PM
To: Ann, Brenna and CB
Subject: Newsletter, March Week 1, 2012

Greetings from South Afrika! Shelley is still traveling though the region and has lots to share about her journeys so far.

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A Child Becomes... PRESCHOOL

From the Director -

Sawubona families! This is a Zulu greeting I send to you from South Afrika. Our trip back to my husband's homeland has been quite memorable. The sky the largest I have ever seen...beyond the "big sky" country of Montana, the countryside the most beautiful in all of the world -- at least in my opinion. We have travelled for many days through Zululand, the Transkei, the Wild Coast and eventually to Cape Town where we will begin our three day adventure back to North America. I have missed my students, coffee, and...internet! Ironically everyone has a cell phone; even the poorest of the poor so you can always get a hold of someone! I have made numerous timing mistakes calling home to make remarks about monkeys, outrageously sized grasshoppers, etc. only to find out I have woken someone for the umpteenth time.

Update on the Book Drive for Swaziland

My husband's family was so grateful that we travelled so far again, to see them and our time here has been truly worthwhile. Unfortunately we never had the opportunity to make it up to Swaziland, the site of school whose library we're helping to build. We quickly realized that the highways were not safe for us to drive alone and plane tickets were prohibitively expensive. Consequently, I have sent along a photo album with pictures of West Seattle, our school, students holding donated books as well as a photo of the

thermometer we're using to measure the amounts of books we collect. Thanks so much again to all of you who helped contribute to our book drive! It could not have been possible without your support. We continue to collect books through April 6th so it's not too late to bring in your books. The school will receive our books by late April, early May.



For those who may not know where Swaziland is, check out the map here for some perspective. The school we're supporting is located 15 minutes from the city of Matsapha, which is slightly southwest of Mbabane. The school is quite rural, ironically located behind the University of Swaziland, and currently is without ANY reading materials at all. Ralph's family is in Durban, South Africa and the farm he grew up on is in Underberg, most of the way to the Lesotho border from Durban.

I felt terrible that I've been unable to visit as the school children had prepared a dance for me! In retrospect, had I known we would have such success getting books so fast, our trip would have been planned with Swaziland as the top priority. It is my plan to stay in touch regularly with the Director of Fundza who will oversee that the books make their way to our school.

The Journey Continues...

As we begin our three day trip home in early March, I have read and have heard so much talk about Mandela lately, as the South African bank notes will now all have his face on them. [Click here to read more.](#) I've known about Nelson Mandela and his efforts but now have a better understanding of the significance of this great man's work and what did for South Afrika. Frankly put, he prevented a blood bath. He prevented a discontented 45 million blacks from overtaking whites through violence, thus ending apartheid. He is quite sick now and has been hospitalized. It is all over the news as people young and old, white and black, plan for his passing. I have asked several people on this trip their opinion

of Mandela. I have talked with the English, an Afrikaner, a Zulus, Xhosa, and two South Afrikan Germans. There has not been a single soul who could speak of him none other than a prophet and peacemaker.

He is a magical man whose works equals that of Gandhi. I guess that it is times like this when we hear names like Mandela and Gandhi that I realize the significance one person can have on others. Each carries to an extent, those very basic 7 life skills I have talked about.

These skills have been used to the benefit of serving others in the makings of a better world. Think about it. An innate ability to communicate with others without violence, to undergo perspective taking skills, think critically, to focus and be attentive to his overall goal of liberation, to go beyond the expected, etc. As he approaches his 94th birthday, he still remains as the patriarch of the country.

“Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world.” Nelson Mandela

School Business

Summer Camps

We will be working on Summer Camps very soon and expect to have those schedules out within the next several weeks. Please look for updates in a future newsletter. We will share information with our current families prior to making classes available to the general public.

Scholastic Book Orders

March order forms will be sent home in your child's bags this week. We will be ordering bonus point books for our classes this month and appreciate your orders as they allow teachers to purchase free books!

Registration 2012-13

All current families who have requested a classroom for the fall should have received an enrollment letter in the mail. If you have not already sent in your Tuition Contract, please return that form to the office to confirm your child's spot. Thanks to all who have done so already!

We are completely full in the Sunbeam class next fall! The Butterfly classroom has a few openings and there is a bit more room in the Caterpillar classroom. Open registration started on Monday, 2/27 and will remain open to the public until the end of April at which point we'll maintain our waitlists. Please [contact the office](#) with any questions you have.

End of Year Student Reports

Each student will receive a portfolio documenting their progress from November to April. It will include examples of their work and photographs. Conferences are optional at this time.

Classroom Wrap Ups - February

Sunbeam Classroom

Pre-K had an enjoyable trip to the Northwest Puppet Center this month where we saw *The True Story of the Three Little Pigs!* We had an opportunity to talk about the original story and then compare the changes when the wolf gives his perspective! Quite a different story! Grandma Dorothy came with a very special story by Jan Brett called *The Valentine Bears*.

We hope that everyone had a nice break last week and that each child is ready for our President's theme this week and Letters /R/ and /S/. Teacher Kristi will begin the African theme next week and I will have brought back many pictures and stories by next Thursday!

Butterfly Classroom

February was a great month for the Butterflies!

We studied portraits and complimentary colors through the works of Andy Warhol. It was fun to play dress-up by decorating pictures of ourselves. We talked about zebras, cows, and pandas from Warhol's wildlife series. We thought about how the animals look realistic when they are black and white, and how they change to look "warholish" when you add bright colors. This was a very successful project!

We spent the week before Valentines Day talking about kindness and loving gestures. We made valentines for each other that were just right for the recipient. We tried to think of

things we know about our friends, and made valentines that reflected something unique about our classmates. We decorated our room for spring and Valentines Day and made valentines heart pockets, it was hard to "sew" our pocket together but with a bit of hard work we have very successful projects! Each child brought home a heart pocket that was full of love from their friends! We had sweet Valentines Day parties that were organized by our amazing and creative parents. The children are always so excited to see you in their school. Thank you so much for all you did to make that a special day for our program.

Our 2 dimensional visual art unit wrapped up with a visit to Seattle Art Museum to see the Gauguin show. We talked about tropical colors and tropical fruits and studied Gauguin's paintings to find these colors. We are looking forward to exploring some three dimensional art materials in the next two weeks, and then changing things completely when we jump into sports exploration!

Caterpillar Classroom

Another month goes flying past and the Caterpillar classes are really developing some wonderful social skills. They are able to share their toys, sometimes without any adult intervention. We now see them inviting others to join them at play and following class schedules with anticipation. Their conversations with us and their classmates have become so much broader in content. It is such a thrill to witness these changes.

The beginning of the month saw us learning the difference between jungle and domestic animals. The mosaic snake project turned out so much better than originally envisaged. The children were very proud of their creations. Some even hung theirs from our fake tree (jungle).

Next came valentines preparation and parties. Each student went around the circle delivering valentines to their classmate's holders. Teacher Ruth and I were very pleased with their ability to preform this task without too much help from us. We had so much fun.

This week we began our plant theme and are learning about all the parts that make up a plant, how they get their food and what things are needed to help them grow.

We have already planted peas and will add radishes to our garden this week. The class all took turns watering our seeds...so fingers crossed.

The snack person for the day now also brings a show and tell item (like the big kids) and it is exciting how well the students have grasped the concept of being up in front of the class discussing their item.

Thank you all for sharing your children with us and supporting us the way you do.

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