

# Montessori Pathways' News

February



## Notes from Ms. Alena (Head of School)

*"Coming together is a beginning,  
staying together is progress, and  
working together is success."*

~ Henry Ford

The Montessori classroom is a place where teamwork and respect are continually fostered. During this time of the year, we are fortunately observing more and more team work in all classrooms.



## The Leadership Opportunity in Montessori Environment

As the years go on, students become more confident in the classroom and with the materials. They are often entrusted to take on the responsibility of helping new friends in the classroom and even showing them how things in the classroom work.

Slowly they become a leader in the classroom modeling behaviors of what they want to see, and also helping their peers gain confidence in the classroom. The responsibility is not passed but earned and entrusted in the classroom. As the children grow, they are given opportunities to become classroom helpers, teaching them that work beyond for the good of self is a reward. When a new child begins in a room filled with leaders, they can easily integrate into the community, someone is always helping them along the way.

Leaders have the ability to teach and show anyone how to gain responsibility and respect in the classroom, helping make leaders of us all. © Baan Dek Montessori

Many of the students understand that they have to be very helpful and respectful to their friends, able to listen and hear them, and be open to suggestions while working together as a team. They learned this through real life classroom experiences.



## Registration for the upcoming 2019-2020 school year has begun!

Thank you to all of the families who have returned the re-enrollment application for the next School Year.

If you have decided to continue your child's education at Montessori Pathways, please

**A) Complete the Re-Enrollment Form for the 2019-2020 School Year**

**B) Attach the New School Year Re-Enrollment Fee:**

- **\$50 of Early Re-Enrollment Fee (before April 16)**

or

- **\$100 of Late Re-Enrollment Fee (after April 15)**

**C) Include the 10% of annual tuition security deposit**

**D) Return the paperwork along with payment no later than April 15, 2019.**

By submitting your 10% of the annual tuition deposit on time, you secure your child's spot at our school for the next school year, can lock in your child's current classroom, and any other special schedules and arrangements made with the school.

All families enrolling and submitting 10% of the tuition **after April 15<sup>th</sup>** will be considered "newly enrolled" families, and will be subject to a new enrollment fee of \$100.00 for 2019-2020 School Year.

Spots for all age groups, including Pre-K, K, and Elementary, are already limited and cannot be guaranteed - "newly enrolled" families will be enrolled on a first come, first serve basis.

Classroom and any other preferences will also be up to administrative discretion based on availability.

**It is important that we know who is re-enrolled in the School Year as soon as possible so that we can make the appropriate plans for hiring staff.**

Students who are enrolled just prior to the start of School Year cannot be guaranteed a spot in the class.

Please do not wait until the last minute and help us and your family be successfully prepared for 2019-2020 School Year on time.

[Click here to see:](#)

[Montessori in Action](#)

[The Kindergarten Year – A Question for parents](#)

[Montessori : The Elementary Years](#)

## Kindergarten and Elementary Demo Classes

The Elementary and Kindergarten Demo Classes were very exciting part of February. Parents were able to get an idea of what the daily work cycle is like. Unfortunately, it is impossible to demonstrate all of the amazing and miraculous moments that we, teachers, can observe every day during just one hour. However, parents still witnessed the enthusiastic and hard work that the kids demonstrated even during the late evening.



~ Kindergarten Demo Class ~

We would like to extend our appreciation to all of our teachers, students, and parents who contributed their time, energy, and enthusiasm in preparation of, and participation in, our annual Demo Classes!



~ Elementary Demo Class ~

# Coming School Events



Montessori Pathways

⇒ **February 19 – March 5 – Moving-On Weeks:**

- ◆ *Kindergarten Extended Day Class Visit Days for Pre-K Students*
- ◆ *Elementary Class Visit Days for Kindergarten students*



⇒ **March 1 – Summer Camp Enrollment Begins**

⇒ **March 13 (Wednesday), 9:00am – 11:00am – Picture Day**

Please dress your child(ren) appropriately. If your child does not attend school that day, you can bring him/her between 9:00am -10:30am to take a picture. In this case your child will have a chance to be included in the class picture.

⇒ **The Parent / Teacher Conferences** for Primary Classes will be held by appointments on

- ◆ **March 14 (Th) – for South Room Kindergarten parents**
- ◆ **March 15 (F) – for South Room Preschool and Pre-K parents**  
*No school for Morning and School Day South Room students*
- ◆ **March 18 (M) – for East Room Preschool and Pre-K parents**  
*No school for Morning and School Day East Room students*
- ◆ **March 29 (Tu) – for East Room Kindergarten parents**



⇒ **March 25 – March 29 - Spring Break**

The school will be operating for All Day (6:45am—6:00pm) students during Spring Break.

⇒ **April 1 - Classes Resume**

⇒ **April 1 - 4 (M-Th) - Elementary Class 4-day Trip to Nature's Classroom Institute in Lake Geneva, WI**

⇒ **April 5 (F) - Elementary Parent / Teacher Conference Day (North Room)**

- ◆ *No School for School Day Elementary students*
- ◆ *Child care is provided for 4:15 / All Day Elementary students*



## NEWS FROM THE ELEMENTARY CLASS

Ms. Bridget



### Happy Black History Month!

This month, we focused on the accomplishments of African Americans. Each morning, we shared newsworthy contributions and events that promoted equal rights and the speaking out by leaders for the justice of all people. We also sang some songs that were pertinent: "Follow the Drinking Gourd" and "Lift Every Voice and Sing".



**Our Valentine's gathering** was filled with love: creating hearts to hang as well as the giving of small cards and gifts. We played games, had goodies and even did graphing group activity involving Conversation Hearts. I read the book, *Valentine's Is*, which had a little of the history of Valentine's Day as well

as some of the symbols of the day.

**In Zoology**, we have moved from Invertebrates to Vertebrates. Our first to explore is the fish. We learned the parts of (including all of the fins) as well as the internal structures. We will also research a fish.



The lessons in **Botany** were about the importance of flowers and the parts of the flower.

**In Geography**, we have been looking at rivers in the US and North America. Some kids were tasked with researching a river of the US. We will look at the parts of the river this week.



We finished our **exploration of early civilizations** with ancient China and India and are now moving on to the Middle Ages time period.

**Math** is still the focus. A student who at the beginning of the year was choosing other works instead of math and admitted not liking math was overheard by many to say, "I cannot wait to do division tomorrow!!" The math fever is catching.



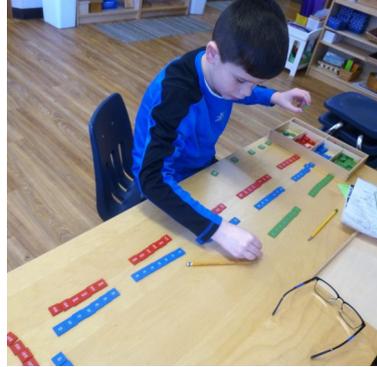
We began receiving our **Kindergarten visitors**. Each elementary buddy wrote a letter to their Kindergarten friend to welcome them to our class. Then it was the elementary child's task to decide what work that he/she could accomplish with their kindergarten partner. It was nice to observe the patience and kindness of our elementary kids. Now every day we have kindergartener's looking at the list to see when is their day to visit!



We walked to the **Raue Center for the Arts** to see Madeline and The Bad Hat. The kids liked the fact that the musical was much like the book but longer and had songs. We liked that they kept the new idioms "a bad hat" and "turning over a new leaf" since we had discussed what each meant as I read the book to them. The elementary also enjoyed being a companion to a primary student in our journey and during the show.

# FEBRUARY PHOTO GALLERY

## Elementary Class



## NEWS FROM THE EXTENDED DAY KINDERGARTEN CLASS

Ms. Karen



**The gift of giving continues.** Valentine's Day was another opportunity for the Kindergarten children to give something special to their parents. I wish you could have been present to watch their absorption, their careful and precise design of their Valentine, their individual touch. It is so delightful to be able to watch your child engaged in such a meaningful work. What came through when observing was their attention to detail and their love of what they are creating.

The children loved the "Knock, Knock" Valentine riddles. Several asked to write copies to take home and share with the family. Hope you also enjoyed them!

Our indoor field trip was a great success. A staff member from the McHenry County Conservation District came to do a presentation on "**Nature in Winter**". That afternoon we joined the elementary class in their room.

We began with what we do in winter ..... change clothing (no swimsuits), change food (hot chocolate instead of cold watermelon, etc). to lay the ground.

Well, what do animals do? Some migrate, some hibernate, some sleep more, the body temperature drops, some camouflage (ex. The cottontail rabbit), some develop a thicker winter coat. What do fish do if the water freezes?

Of course, what made the lesson even more interesting was that the MCCD staff brought animals furs to be passed around. So, yes, we did hold a skunk, and a fox, and a rabbit, and a racoon ..... many more. The children were totally absorbed

"**Animals in Winter**" field trip to Preirievew Education Center was a great continuation of the previous topic.



In our **Math Area**, one of the most popular activities is the **Addition Strip Board**: It is comprised of one set of red strips and one set of blue strips. Each of the strips in a given set varies in length from 1 to 9. Across the top of the board are the numbers 1 - 18.

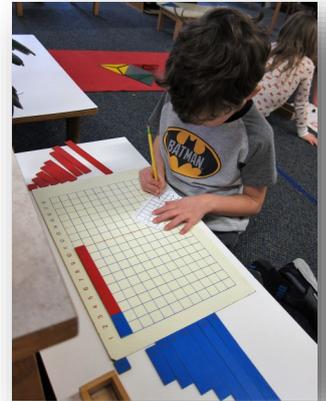
The board is kind of "magical" in that when strips are placed next to each other on the board, the correct addition answer "appears" at the top. Hence it is a shortcut. No counting necessary. We simply "read" the board:  $6 + 4 = 10$ . The purpose of the board is to help children memorize the addition facts of the addition table in a meaningful manipulative experience. It is

used AFTER children have had much experience with adding concrete objects and have had "real life" experience in addition. We want them to understand the PROCESS of addition as well as memorize the facts of addition through repetition. This work enables both to develop.

For example, we can learn the doubles of numbers (a pattern) and the fact that addition can be done in any order without changing the answer (ex.  $2 + 5$  and  $5 + 2$  both give the same answer). We learned this in middle school pre-algebra as the commutative principle of addition.

This activity has become so popular, it is in use almost every day. There are many forms of papers that the children can use to maintain their interest in strip board work: circle problem paper, chart problem paper, various kinds of addition books. With the change in the look of the answer paper, the child more easily stays interested.

**A new art activity** has been introduced and available on a daily basis: using only the primary colors to blend and create the secondary colors by overlapping the primary color circles.



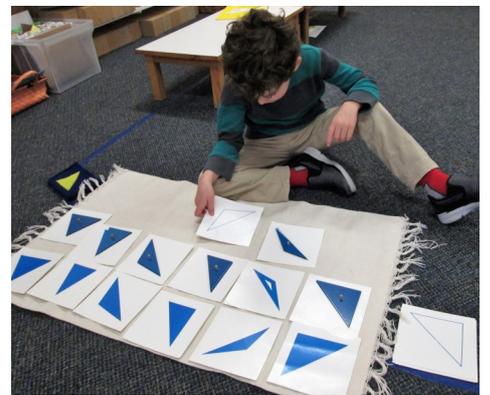
Of course, **winter has been a hit!** Children love the outdoors shoveling, sledding, making tracks, a fun time. Today, running and sliding across an ice patch on the playground.

One "problem" we frequently encounter these days is running out of time! Many of the students are still busily engaged at 3:00!



# FEBRUARY PHOTO GALLERY

## Kindergarten Extended Day Class



## NEWS FROM THE ART CLASS (KINDERGARTEN AND ELEMENTARY)

**Ms. Jennifer**



Hello Montessori Parents!

January & February have had us busy with a very involved project. We've been creating a handmade Treasure Book, featuring hand-painted & stamped covers, an accordion binding, and twelve pockets, in which to collect each month's treasures, such as little notes, stickers, and movie ticket stubs.

This project was quite an undertaking, and a lesson in organization, as well as patience, as there were MANY small pieces to keep track of. There was cutting, die-cutting, gluing, coloring, painting, and organization of numbers, the months of the year, and colors in ROY G BIV patterns. They did it all!



Following the step-by-step instructions, understanding the process of the book's construction, and having the dedication to see the project through to the end, tested us all, especially when considering the effect that the weather had on everyone's health and student attendance through the month of January...but, your children persevered every step of the way. And, I could see, on their faces, a combination of, both personal pride in what they had created, as well as, relief for having completed the project. I couldn't be more proud of them! I hope you will help them find ways to collect little treasures to fill the pockets each month, making 2019 full of fond memories.



We took a little break from working on our Treasure Books to create a Valentine's Day project, which featured a tin-foil-embossed pattern that the students created using a die-cut machine. They were very impressed, (pun intended), with the ease with which such a striking effect could be created for their Steampunk-inspired valentine. This was a one-day, step-by-step, everything-ready-to-assemble, project that was just what everyone needed to recharge, creatively speaking. Sometimes, you just have to step away from the big projects in life, switch "gears," and take a moment to pursue those easy-peasy, confidence-building, instant-gratification, artistic endeavors.



Next, we've begun working on a Dr. Seuss-inspired diorama in honor of Dr. Seuss' birthday, March 2nd. It seemed appropriate to create something 3-D, whimsical, & full of color to celebrate and welcome the first day of Spring, March 20th, which is finally approaching.

Thank you for supporting all of your children's artistic efforts. Abby, and I, hope their work is filling your homes with color and joy.

## NEWS FROM THE SOUTH ROOM



**Ms. Andrea, Ms. Urana**

Thank you to all the families who donated items and time for our Valentine's party. It was a lot of fun and the children seemed to really enjoy the morning so thank you again for your help.

This second half of the school year is always a very exciting time because the daily routine, classroom rules and expectations are now mostly understood, followed and internalized at this point. The sense of community and responsibility to others is apparent in the interactions between the children; helping one another without a teacher request to do so is one of the goals of a Montessori multi-age classroom. It's especially heart-warming to watch an older 3-year-old help a younger 3-year-old with a task that they themselves needed help with just a few short months ago.



We continue to encourage each child to use their language skills throughout the day be it verbal, when expressing themselves to another person with grace & courtesy or adding writing to as many extensions of works throughout the classroom. In the language area (and really in almost all areas of the classroom) the children continue to expand on their reading and writing skills.

We would love for you to also encourage more *language practice at home* when possible. Anytime you can encourage your child to write letter or number formations is great practice. Most children love to draw and color, you can get them a special notebook and some interesting writing utensils and have them "write" in their journal. Perhaps what they write may look like scribbles to you but it's all prewriting practice. You can also work with them to label different parts of their drawings with some label stickers.



Again, letting them work at their own ability level and without the pressure of it being spelled "right" this offers them more time holding their pencil with the pincer grip and using their own knowledge of the sounds and shapes of their letters and numbers.

*For counting and numbers*, they can count just about any thing in the house and do the same thing as with their sounds, have them sort their toys by similar attributes and then count them and label them with the number: 25 red Legos, 15 blue Legos, etc. A helpful source for more ideas of games you can make at home is Pinterest.

*Working on sounds and numbers at home* is always something you can do. One work that we have in the classroom that you can adapt to your home is "labelling the classroom." This can be done in many ways with just a stack of post-its or some strips of scrap paper and tape.

Here are a few ideas starting with the very basic and progressing in difficulty:

- 1) Sit with your child and have them use the sounds they know to label items in your home with just the beginning sound: "t" for table, "r" for refrigerator, etc. If your child can write it independently, great, if not, you can write it with a yellow marker, or lightly with a pencil and have them trace over your letters. Then they get to go tape it to that item.
- 2) Another option, slightly more challenging, is using just the end sound: "p" for lamp, "r" for chair.
- 3) If your child is a bit more advanced, have them sound out as many letters of the entire word as they can hear: table might be "tabl" or drawer "drwr."
- 4) You can see if they can hear the middle vowel sound: "a" for table, "o" for stove, and "e" for bed.
- 5) Some children want to know the exact spelling; in this case, you can write the whole word "table" and then have them copy on another paper. Or use the tracing method with the yellow marker.

We are looking forward to warmer weather and with that more opportunities to extend our work outside.



# FEBRUARY PHOTO GALLERY

## South Room



# PRE-K EXTENDED DAY NEWS

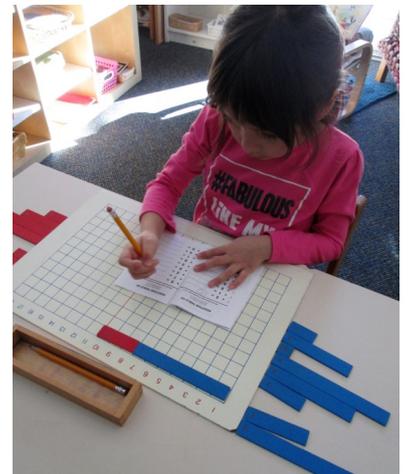


## Ms. Andrea

The Pre-K group keeps growing, as our older nappers begin to transition out of their nap and into the extended day. It's great to spend more time with these children and to get them more involved in longer and more challenging work choices.

We also have been invited to join some of the older field trips. So far, we have attended the theater trip to see *Madeline and the Bad Hat* musical. It was a fun trip and the experience seemed to make the Pre-K feel like part of the "older kids" at school.

We are also attending a hike at a nature center to look for animal tracks and animals in winter. This trip has already inspired the children to notice the tracks in the snow on our playground.



## NEWS FROM THE EAST ROOM



**Ms. Lorrie, Ms. Carole**

### **Grace and Courtesy: "I would be happy to. . ."**

Academic learning is an important component in our learning environments. But developing the social skills of kindness and respectfulness is just as important, maybe more so. The social skills of self-control, cooperation, and respectfulness are key to the functioning of our class and to life in general. We have been practicing a few grace and courtesy lessons to help the children navigate some of the frustrations of their day.

First, it is so easy for them to tell the other child what they DO NOT want their friend to do. We take a moment to help them think of what they do want to have happen. Then we help them formulate a positive direction and demonstrate giving the request with a kind voice and gentle face. (The adage about bees and honey comes to mind.)

For example, if a child's space is infringed upon, she can ask the other child to, "please scoot back" or "please step back, friend." Perhaps a child is interrupting another's work, she can request, "Please find your own work. I am concentrating now."

Ms. Karen gave the Kindergartners a very helpful lesson on how to respond if we are asked to assist in a situation. If asked by a teacher or friend to offer a helping hand, we can respond, "I would be happy to." "Would you be so kind as to put this chair under the language table? I would be happy to."

Kind words help produce kind actions. And that will make us all happy.

### **Valentine's Day Party**

Our valentine party was a great success thanks to all of you. The morning was full of valentine crafts, games, and yummy snacks. We are so grateful for all the help and supplies that you gave to make the day a special one for the children. Thanks goes to Maddy's mom, Melissa, for helping the children make their turtle snacks. A special thank you to Cori, Melody, and Jennifer for the fun valentine crafts they helped the children make. And Thank you to Sebastian's family for providing the valentine bags and stickers for our cards. We sing a song that says, "Love is something if you give it away, you end up having more." The children had a tangible experience of "having more" as their valentine bags were filled to bursting with good wishes and candy. Thank you!

### **Author of the Month**

Our whole school celebrated Dr. Seuss week, so naturally our author of the month was Theodore Geisel. Dr. Seuss is best known for his rhyming children's books, but he began his career as a political cartoonist. As a child he loved to go to the zoo with his family and sketch the animals. We learned that Dr. Seuss was his "pen name" and he wasn't really a doctor. Although he never had children of his own, he wanted to help children learn to read. He wrote many popular children's books that have become classics. We will continue reading some over the next weeks.

We have been invited to visit the elementary classroom for story time next week. We will be treated to Dr. Seuss stories read by our elementary students.



Our class will be reading *The Foot Book* and *Fox in Socks* among other Dr. Seuss classics. We will be decorating socks, measuring our feet, and perhaps we will measure the total length of all our shoes as they line up to march out the door. The work of Dr. Seuss lends itself to all kinds of fun exploration of alliteration, rhyming patterns, and mathematical thinking.

We want to thank Amy Primeau (Miles' mom) for offering to come in to help with our Fox in Socks projects!

### **I'm Freezing**

We have had some exceptionally cold, polar weather this past month. It seemed a fitting time to bring in study about animals of the polar region. Did you know that polar bears and penguins do not live together? One lives at the Arctic circle and the other lives at the south pole in Antarctica. Empire penguins can grow to be as tall as a kindergartener and the fathers incubate the eggs by holding them under a brooding pouch on their feet. There is a special whale that has a long tusk, like a unicorn, that swims in the Arctic Sea. We have set up a "polar shelf" with activities that encourage the children to dive deeper into our topic through working with parts of the penguin cards, riddle cards, and sorting animals as to habitat.

### **Songs we like to sing**

*Love is something if you give it away, give it away, give it away  
Love is something is you give it away You end up having more.  
It's just like a magic penny. Hold it close, you won't have any  
Lend it, spend it, and you'll have so many. They'll roll all over the floor  
SOOOO*

*Love is something if you give it away, give it away, give it away  
Love is something if you give it away, you'll end up having more!*

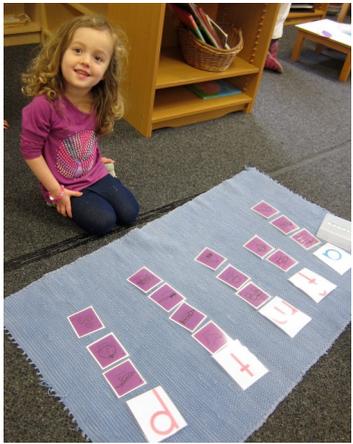
Thank you for all the love you send our way.

Our hearts are Full!



# FEBRUARY PHOTO GALLERY

## East Room



## NEWS FROM THE LATE AFTERNOON CLASS

**Ms. Donna**



How does it happen that the shortest month has so many things going on?

We began February by learning about an animal called a groundhog. Groundhog Day is celebrated on February 2 of each year.

This year Chinese New Year began on February 5. It is the year of the PIG. People clean their houses, invite guest over, enjoy eating clementines and giving red envelopes containing money

Then we celebrated Valentine's Day on February 14 and talked about the President's Day, a holiday celebrated in the United States on the third Monday in February every year. We honor George Washington our first president and Abraham Lincoln (from Illinois) as well as all the other United States presidents. Black History Month all of February. All of these holidays were followed with a lot of reading and creative art projects,



"Healthy Teeth" was another topic of the month. Remember to brush your teeth twice a day, floss them, and see your dentist two times a year. Teeth are the only part of the body that cannot heal themselves. It is our job to help them stay healthy.

Dr. Seuss week was full of sharing our favorite books written by him. It seems that "One Fish. Two Fish. Red Fish. Blue Fish." is our favorite.

### ART:

- Groundhog
- Pig
- Love Bug made out of hearts
- Five different sizes and colors of hearts placed on top of each other beginning with the largest and ending with the smallest.
- Stamping with three different paper tubes on top of the shape of a heart. Using red, pink and purple paint.
- Silhouettes of George Washing and Abe Lincoln glued on red, white and blue paper.



- A heart color by number sheet #1 leave white, #2 red and #3 pink.

### BOOKS:

- "A Book of Hugs" by David Ross
- "Whose Teeth are These?" by Kris Hirschmann

### GAMES/SONGS:

- "Valentine, Do You Have a Letter?" - one child walks around the circle and drops a valentine behind someone while we are singing. The new person picks up the valentine and walks around the circle while we sing the song etc.
- "I Love You" adapted by Shaunna Evans; Tune 1,2, Buckle My Shoe

- 1, 2 - I love You!
- 3, 4 - Flowers at your door!
- 5,6 - Cakes I'll mix!
- 7,8 - You're so great!
- 9, 10 - I'll tell you again...  
I Love you!



- Scrabble Jr. Board Game
- Shape-o-ball - dump out the shapes and then match them to their spot on the ball

### SCIENCE:

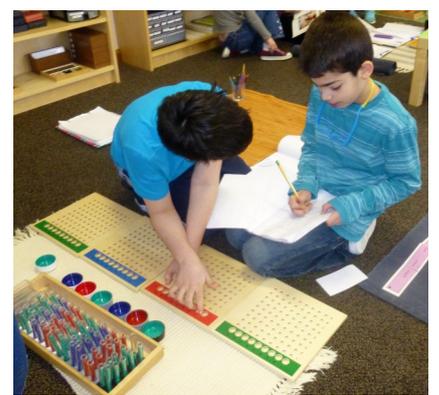
Hypothesis is a starting point for further investigation

*What Do You Think Will Happen?* We began with six different containers and added five candy conversation hearts to each container ( air, water, rubbing alcohol, hand sanitizer, apple juice and vinegar) These were their predictions; Air-- nothing would happen, water-- dissolve, rubbing alcohol -- dissolve, hand sanitizer-- erupt and spill on us, apple juice-- melt, vinegar--some said explode others said dissolve.



**Conclusions:** Nothing happened to the ones in the air (nothing added to the container), Water began to soften the hearts, rubbing alcohol began to soften the hearts, Hand sanitizer did not erupt or spill on us but did begin to soften, apple juice did not melt but began to soften, and the vinegar did not explode or dissolve but they did begin to soften. We examine the six containers for three days. As for our predictions we had one correct. Air did not change the hearts in anyway.

# More Wonderful Moments at Pathways in February



# “Animals in Winter” Kindergarten and Elementary Field Trip

