

CREATIVELY SPEAKING

Loving, Nurturing & Educating Children Since 1968

December 2011

CREATIVE PLAYROOMS

Vol. 12

*Merry
Christmas*



**Creative Playrooms
Montessori Schools
&
Child Care Centers**

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DECEMBER HIGHLIGHTS



- December 16:** Class Holiday Parties
- December 19:** Montessori & Kindergarten Winter
- December 21:** First Day of Hanukkah
- December 25:** Christmas Day
- December 26:** Christmas Observance (center is closed)
- December 26:** First Day of Kwanzaa

From the Regional Director's Desk ~ Debbie Pack

As the first half of the school year ends, the children are excited for the holiday season and their winter programs. We look forward to seeing some of the special talents the children have, as well as the amazing sets and costumes! We hope to make these events memorable for your children and family.

Each center will have a Giving Tree displayed for donations of new hats, mittens, and scarves for children in need. Everyone is encouraged to hang one item on the tree. Donations for coats for children are also welcome. This is the season of giving, so please remember those less fortunate.

Finally, the school age children look forward to exciting theme days and activities during the winter break!

I wish you and your family a wonderful holiday season!

- Please note the parking lot speed limit is 5mph. You need to use caution and watch for children entering/exiting vehicles and buses.
- As the weather gets colder, please do not leave your cars running in the parking lots. Also, hold your child's hand as you cross the parking lot.
- All coats should be labeled with your child's name or initials to avoid any confusion.

What's Happening Around Us...

Submitted by Center Directors

Independence ~ Donna Kupiecki

We are planning a Holiday Happiness week. This week will be a week consisting of fun holiday themes to add to the excitement of the upcoming holiday season. A few of the activities planned will be dreidel drop, candy cane countdown, decorating holiday cookies, musical presents, and Rudolph puppets.

The Montessori children are waiting anxiously to use the snow shovels. The children will be taught how to shovel the snow on the sidewalk to make it safer for the children and parents as they enter and exit the center.

Employee of the Month

Congratulations to Peggy Albaugh! Miss Peggy has been employed at Creative Playrooms since March 2006. She is the Montessori Directress and a huge asset to our center. She is always willing to give 110% and she works very hard. The parents and the children love her! Thank you for all your hard work and dedication Miss Peggy! When she was asked what the best part of her day was, she replied, "watching the children learn and grow at each new achievement."

Maple Heights ~ Lisa Woodward

Happy Holidays to all! We look forward to our holiday programs. The Pre-Kindergarten Program is scheduled for Monday, December 12th at 7:00p.m., and the Kindergarten Program is on Tuesday, December 13th at 7:00p.m. Both programs will be held at the center. Our class parties will be held on Friday, December 16th. We look forward to Santa coming to our center to visit.

Employee of the Month

Congratulations to Mary Gregory. Mary began with Creative Playrooms in 1999 in the infant room. She currently works with the school age children in the afternoon. Mary takes care of her own children and has always found time to be a foster mom as well.

Parma ~ Gina Kraus

The Kindergarten, Pre-K, and Montessori classes are excitedly preparing for their annual holiday programs. They are eager to sing their songs and show off their costumes to their families. The Montessori children are excited to invite their parents to join them with their "Annual Gingerbread House Creation." The children will also have a book exchange in the Montessori and Kindergarten classrooms to celebrate the holiday season.

Employee of the Month

Congratulations to Mr. Brian Hamm, our employee of the month. Mr. Brian has been a Creative Playrooms employee since December 2005. As a Bus Driver, he is a major asset to our program. Mr. Brian understands the importance of being a care giver and does everything necessary to make his bus safe while taking the children to and from school and field trips. Three words the families would use to describe him are friendly, caring, and happy.

Solon ~ Kathleen Milliken

HAPPY HOLIDAYS! December is a very busy month. Our after school children will make a visit to a nursing home. Our center is collecting slightly used coats and canned foods. Please drop them off in the office. St. Nick will be coming for a visit on December 16th during our winter parties. Our fundraiser items will be delivered early in the month. Winter programs will be performed at Solon High School - Pre-Kindergarten on Wednesday, December 14th, and Montessori and Kindergarten on Monday, December 12th. We hope everyone has a safe and healthy holiday season!

Employee of the Month

During the month of December we are grateful for all of our staff. I want to personally thank each staff member on their extra efforts in keeping the center the best in Solon. I am thankful for all of the staff who demonstrate a great working relationship with the families. Have a safe and fun holiday season!

Strongsville ~ Dawn Holbrook

The holiday season is well underway and the food donation box will stay out the whole month of December. Please take a moment out of your day to help others in need this holiday season. The hat and mitten tree is up and any donations would greatly be appreciated.

Employee of the Month

Jenny Keck has worked for the Strongsville Montessori & Child Care Center since 2006. She is a hard worker and dedicated employee. Her love of children shows in her teaching and patience. Jenny's favorite children's book is Where the Wild Things Are by Maurice Sendak. She would tell any new teacher the most important thing you can do is to treat all children as if they were your own.

Westlake ~ Susan Frazier

December has arrived bringing celebrations galore! We start off the month celebrating St. Nicholas Day on December 6th. The children will leave their shoes in the hallway during naptime for St. Nicholas to fill with candy. On Friday, the 16th we will have our class holiday parties. That is also the beginning of the nine day Mexican celebration of Las Posadas. The Preschool and Pre-K classes will be learning about this celebration in conjunction with their Spanish lessons. Hanukkah begins at sundown on the 20th, and our classes will be practicing their math by playing the dreidel game.

Our winter programs will be held here at the center. The Montessori program will be on Tuesday, December 13th and the Pre-K and Kindergarten program will be on Wednesday, December 15th. The Kindergarten class will present "The Grinch Who Stole Christmas".

Employee of the Month

Miss Julia Smith brings her smile and cheery attitude to our Infant I room every day. She loves the babies, and especially enjoys taking them out on walks outside when the weather is nice. She also likes to bring out the babies' inner artist with painting and other art activities. Congratulations Miss Julia, and thank you for all your hard work and dedication to Westlake Montessori & Child Care Center.

December Curriculum Ideas & Classroom Themes

Infant Info - Themes: Snow, Wrapping & Bells

- Sensory:** Ring the Bell, Taste Jello, Taste Sour, Touch Wet, Mirror Faces
Gross Motor: Roll the Ball, Rocking Horse, Tunnel Time, Belly Time, Stretching
Fine Motor: Stacking, Drink from a Cup, Pouring, Little People, Finger Paint
Audio/Visual: Colors, Pat a Cake, Listen to a Story, Sing Songs, Clapping Fun



Jr. Toddler Tidbits - Themes: Let it Snow, Gingerbread Days, Reindeer Games, Happy Holidays



- Practical Life:** Dress Up, Bake Cookies, Dusting, Clean Your Room, Decorate the Tree
Gross Motor: Baker Says, Jingle Bells Toss, Hide & Seek, Wrap Presents, Sweeping
Language: Number 4, Letters G & H, The Color Green, Candy Canes, Marble Paint
Science: Magnets, Sensory Bags, Bow Match, Sensory Bottles, Science Tray

Sr. Toddlers/Preschool Posting - Themes: Fasten Up! Gingerbread Days, 'Tis the Season

- Practical Life:** Cooking Up Fun, Puppets, Stars on Stage, Kwanzaa Harvest, Holiday Blocks
Gross Motor: Run, Run, Run, Alarm Clock Game, Reindeer Games, Dreidel
Language/Math: Gingerbread Match, Nos. 9, 10 & 11, Jingle & Stomp Song
Science/Cooking: Gingerbread Senses, Sugar Plums, Icy Fun, Glitter Dough
Art: Holiday Gift Center, Happy Holiday House, Holiday Candle



Pre-K Publication - Themes: Get Up and Move, Folk Tales, Kings and Queens, Merry Christmas, & Cultural Christmas



- Language Arts:** Letters N, O, & P, Review Numbers 1-16
Science: Crayon Resist, Chalk Lines, Freeze and Melt, Where Am I?
Music/Movement: Hi Ho! Reindeer Bam, Caroling, Old King Cole, Guard the Gift
Messy Table/Cooking: Foil Sculptures, Wrapping Gifts, Lucia Cats, Oobleck, Finger Foods
Art: Drizzle Ornaments, Jingle Bells, Splat! Paint the Dragons, Follow the Bread Crumbs

Before & After School Social Corner - Themes: Frosty

- Backyard Science:** Ice Melt, Measuring Snow, Sugar Cube Houses, Where Do You Live?
Cooking: Icees, Ice Cream Day, Eat a Brownie Day
Games Galore: Snowman Relay, Frosty Says, Freeze Dance, Freeze Tag
Art: Icicles, Snowflakes, Holiday Decorations, Train Tracks
 Design a Scarf, Snowmen



**** Sign up for Winter Break Fun Days in your Afterschool Classroom ****

MONTESSORI MATTERS

Independence Center

Themes: Hanukkah, Christmas, Kwanzaa, Winter! Happy New Year

The Holiday Program will be held this month. We have practiced and are ready for costumes and singing. We will explore Christmas customs around the globe. Special treats for our animal friends, and our family are also created this month. We are all looking forward to a visit from that "Man in the Red Suit", and his elf sometime this month.



Sensorial:	Color Weeks, Snow
Geography:	Global Holiday Customs & Celebrations
Language:	Review Letters, Write Christmas Lists
Math:	Review Numbers, Holiday Bingo
Practical Life:	Wrap Presents, Marshmallow Snowmen
Science:	What is Snow? New Years, Winter
Art:	Snow Painting, Holiday Gifts (Secret!!)



Parma Center

Themes: Holidays Around the World (Hanukkah, Christmas, Kwanzaa.)

It's hard to believe Thanksgiving is behind us and the holiday season is fast approaching. The sparkling lights and glowing trees remind us of the joys of the season.

Please bring in a wrapped book for our holiday party book exchange. The extended day children will also be constructing a gingerbread house. Please join us in creating these beautiful masterpieces.

Sensorial:	Color Words
Geography:	Israel and Sweden
Language:	Story Sequencing, Global Matching Snowflakes
Math:	1:1 Tree Stamping
Practical Life:	Tweezing Red and Green Beads
Science:	Primary and Secondary Color Mixing
Art:	Positive/Negative Glitter Christmas Ornaments



MONTESSORI MATTERS

Solon Center

Themes: Snowmen, Snowflakes, Hanukkah, Christmas, Kwanzaa and New Years

Happy Holidays! We will be having our Winter Program on December 12th at 7:00 p.m., at the Solon High School Lecture Hall. Please make sure your children are practicing their songs at home. Our class will be having their holiday party on December 16th. We will be doing a lot of fun art projects and activities.



Sensorial:	Mystery Bag, Smelling Bottles
Geography:	Months, Land and Water Forms
Language:	Sand Tray, Metal Insets
Math:	Zero Activity, Spindle Boxes
Practical Life:	How to Mix Colored Water, How to Clean Sunglasses
Science:	Amphibians, Frog Life Cycle
Art:	Snowflakes, Holiday Art



Strongsville Center

Themes: Hanukkah, Christmas, Kwanzaa, & Christmas Around the World

The Montessori Winter Program is on Thursday, December 1st, at 7:00 p.m.. The children are looking forward to performing for family and friends. Please have your child to the Montessori classroom by 6:30 p.m. Our holiday party will be on Friday, December 16th.



Sensorial:	Touching Snow
Geography:	How Many Days in a Week, Month, Year?
Language:	Letters, Sight Words, Reading Simple Books
Math:	Number, Exchange Game, Addition/Subtraction
Practical Life:	Dressing Frames, Washing Tables
Science:	Color Mixing, Names of Farm Animals
Art:	Stockings and Trees



Westlake Center

Themes: Hanukkah, Christmas, Kwanzaa and Other Holiday Celebrations Around the World

The main event for this month is our class holiday show on December 13th at 7:00p.m. The children have been working very hard and are excited to show their parents! Please check out all the festive artwork displayed in our room and hallway. The class has been working very hard on their Montessori works and are ready for a well-deserved break. Our class holiday party will be on Friday, December 16th. Winter break is from December 19th to January 2nd. The room will be available for child care during that time.



Sensorial:	Christmas Card Rubbing, Smelling Holiday Spices
Geography:	Continent Map Tracing and Punching
Language:	Letters K & L
Math:	Addition Stripboard
Practical Life:	Wrap a Present and Putting on Gloves
Science:	Solid, Liquid, Gas
Art:	Making Gift Tags, Holiday Stocking



KINDERGARTEN KORNER

Maple Heights Center ~ Ms. Elyse Cox

Themes: Gingerbread Men, Holiday Traditions and Special Holidays Around the World

December is sure to be a terrific month filled with holiday cheer, and of course my favorite, tons of learning! Our Holiday Program will be Tuesday, December 13th. The children are working very hard and are excited to perform for their family.

Math: Graphing, Before & After, Number Placements
Language: Letters Dd, Ss, & Mm,
Science: All About Animals
Social Studies: Holiday Traditions and Holidays Around the World



Parma Center ~ Mrs. Nicole Tokar

Themes: Gingerbread Men, Holiday Traditions and Special Holidays Around the World

December...a time of sights that dazzle the eyes, festive colors, beautiful packages and seasonal scents. Most of all, it is a magical time of the year for children.

The Kindergarten class has filled their cotton ball jar, earning them a class reward. Congratulations on a job well done.



Math: Graphs and Numbers
Language: Emergent Literacy
Science: Hibernation
Social Studies: Holidays Around the World

Solon Center ~ Mrs. Sarah Kelley

Themes: Gingerbread Men, Holiday Traditions, Holidays Around the World



Please join us at the Solon High School Lecture Hall on Monday, December 12th, for our winter program. The children have been practicing very hard and can't wait to perform for their family. Our holiday party will be on Friday, December 16th. Winter break begins on December 19th for the Kindergarteners, however, the center will be open for child care services.

Math: Graphing, Collecting Data, Review Positional Words
Language: Review D, S, M, I, Introduce Letters T and C, Story Elements & Sequencing
Social Studies: Holidays and Traditions Around the World
Science: Explaining Matter: Paper and Cloth, Wood and Metal

KINDERGARTEN KORNER

Strongsville Center ~ Mrs. Sue Kemp

Themes: Gingerbread Men, Holiday Traditions and Special Holidays

December is a time of festive colors and a time of children's sparkling eyes and laughter. The Kindergarten class will present "Fun at Christmas", our Holiday program, on December 15th at 7:30 p.m. Please bring your family and friends to enjoy your child's special night and celebrate the Holiday season.

Our popcorn wall is bursting with all of our sight words. Please keep practicing them all the time.



Math:	Graphs, Numbers to 20
Language:	Letters M & N
Social Studies:	Holiday Traditions Around the World
Science:	Snow & Ice, Winter

Westlake Center ~ Mrs. Emily Harter

Themes: Snow, Winter, Santa, Holidays Around the World

Happy December! This month brings lots of winter fun and snow. We are very excited for our winter program, "How the Grinch Stole Christmas", which will be performed on December 14th at 7:00p.m. Remember Kindergarten's winter break is December 19 to January 2, however, childcare will be available for those who need it. Our class party will be December 16th - so look for the treat sign-up sheet on the door. Have a safe and restful holiday season.

Math:	Adding with Numbers, Measurement, Graphing
Language:	Blends, Story Sequencing, Syllables
Social Studies:	Holidays Around the World
Science:	Matter: Liquid, Solid, and Gas



Pool News ~ Solon

(A different center is highlighted each month)

Last month we finished our evaluations. This month the toddler and preschool children will be working on blowing bubbles and kicking while holding on to the wall.

The Pre-K and Montessori children are working on the front crawl and on their stomachs. After school they look forward to their weekly relay race.



Please check the pool window for more exciting pool news.



Employee Spotlight Crystal Cruz

Crystal has been an important member of the Creative Playrooms family for eight years. She began her career in the Montessori classroom at Westlake and from there she was a teacher and supervisor in the Preschool class. This past May she moved into the front office as the Assistant Director.

Crystal is the proud mother of Jayla, 4, with whom she spends much of her free time. Crystal enjoys playing basketball, softball, roller skate, and go bowling. This summer she enjoyed a cruise to the Caribbean and had the time of her life.

Thank you, Crystal!



~~HAPPY BIRTHDAY~~

MAY TODAY BE AS EXTRAORDINARY AS YOU!

~~HAPPY ANNIVERSARY~~



SHARING THE JOYS THAT BLOSSOM EACH YEAR IN YOUR DEVOTION
TO CREATIVE PLAYROOMS MONTESSORI & CHILD CARE CENTERS!

DECEMBER

BIRTHDAYS

ANNIVERSARIES

CORPORATE

Tina Merolla 12/05

NONE

INDEPENDENCE

Kathy Polimene 12/08

NONE

MAPLE HEIGHTS

Ron Malaga 12/23

Mary Gregory 12 Yrs.

PARMA

NONE

Brian Hamm 6 Yrs.
Danielle McGraw 2 Yrs.
Crystal Riedel 10 Yrs.

OLON

Melanie Casarona 12/19
Kathleen Milliken 12/30
Trina Wilson 12/19

Kyra Mach 1 Yr.

STRONGSVILLE

Samantha Landis 12/04
Kathleen Walker 12/10

Sharon Innocenzi 10 Yrs.
Brenda Lash 6 Yrs.

WESTLAKE

Katie McConnon 12/26

Kathleen Leslie 1 Yr.