

BEECHWOOD KNOLL KINDERGARTEN CORNER  
September 2011

Dear Family,

These first few weeks of school were exhausting so that's why I've been a bit grumpy after school! Let me tell you about some of the activities in the class.

You know I can write my name, but now I have to write it the "kindergarten" way which is much harder. The letters have to be made a certain way. I practice each time I write my name (which is very often) but sometimes I slip back to the old way. The "kindergarten" way will soon be second nature to me! Actually there are lots of rules that I have to follow in kindergarten and remembering them isn't always easy. The hand washing continues.

Every day the class does "calendar". Someone writes the number of the day of the month on a shape and that shape must be in the correct pattern. The weather chart must be colored, the number of days we are at school are counted, the days of the week, months, shapes and colors are read. Apparently there is even more to do at "calendar"! I have learned the Pledge of Allegiance and why we say it. I even know that the flag is a symbol of America and how it takes care of us. The flag cannot baby sit me! I sing a song about the flag. I have learned that when I have been in school 100 days there is a party. No matter how exhausted I am, I am determined to stay in school so I can celebrate.

The theme of the month was called Getting to Know You and the letters we learned were M and S. I have started to learn what my new friends like and they are learning about me. Although... I think this theme will continue through the year. I learned about my friends by playing a picture scavenger hunt. The longest 1<sup>st</sup> name of my friends has 9 letters and the shortest has 4. Some names have tall, short or hanging letters. I have started working on a book called All About Me and a nursery rhyme book. I also started an alphabet and feelings book. I will be working on them throughout the year. I hope you enjoyed looking at our family apple tree during open house. I made the tree trunk by tracing my arm. The apples are the drawings I made of each family member. Some of the activities I have done to help me remember the name and sound of the letters of the week are marching, having a sitting race, playing tic, tac, toe using the letters of the week instead of X's and O's and using small mirrors to see what my mouth looks like when I say the letter and its sound. I use a small white board and markers to practice making the letter. I have also learned the kindergarten way of using stamps...putting the stamps back in alphabetical order. Besides reading lots of stories the class also reads poems and tries to match up the sentences of the poem with the same sentences that are written on separate strips of paper. Yes, this is challenging! I have learned that letters have sounds and that letters make words and words make sentences. This is a lot of information. I have even discussed rhyming and the sounds at the end of the word. I have also learned how to put together and read the small paper book called a pre-decodable. I will be

making one every week and then we can read it together at home! I like using the overhead projector to learn. It makes great shadows, but waiting your turn is difficult. Only one person at a time can write a number, letter or color on the transparencies.

In kindergarten, math is so much more than counting! Sometimes a T graph is used. Mrs. Cobban asks us a yes or no question. Depending on my answer, I put a clothes pin on the yes or no written on the T graph. Then the class decides which answer has the most by looking at the amount of clothes pins on the words yes and no. The clothes pins are matched up to prove which word has the most. The class also learned about bar graphs when we talked about our favorite color apple, and our eye colors. I used dice to play a numbers game. The number book I made only had the numbers to 5 because I have to practice making the numbers the “kindergarten” way! I also have learned about mazes and dot to dots. Using a paper snake that I cut out and numbered, I measured the pictures of different objects. I played with bean bags to learn about colors and spatial concepts (above, below, beside). Mrs. Cobban will spell a color while the class is looking at the color chart. If I am wearing that color then I line up to go to lunch or to a specialist. It really is a concentration game! The color wheel that I made was colored, cut and put together by me! I am learning about patterning using plastic teddy bears, colored squares and unifix cubes. Not an easy concept.

Since this is apple season I have learned how apples grow from a seed in to a flower and that the flower is at the bottom of the apple that I eat. Did you know an apple has a star inside? I heard a flannel board story about it and then saw it in a real apple. I heard a different version of that story and then had to compare the stories! The taste test with red, yellow and green apples was delicious! Maybe we could do this at home. The season is now Autumn, better known as Fall. In class, two friends played the sun and the earth and I learned how the earth is leaning away from the sun. The earth person didn’t get too dizzy from spinning around. I also learned this doesn’t happen over night. Autumn means the leaves start to fall off the trees. We observed the veins in the leaves and our own bodies. Did you know that the green on the leaves is like a coat that covers up different colors underneath? When the sun does not shine long enough the leaves can’t make chlorophyll and so the green disappears and the red, yellow, or orange colors show up. The leaves die but the trees do not die in the winter, they just go to sleep. The celery that was put in colored water was proof that celery, plants, and trees drink water. The leaves of the celery stalks turned the same color as the colored water and when the celery was cut, the veins were the same color. Amazing! I learned about and celebrated Johnny Chapman’s birthday. He isn’t even in the class but he comes from Massachusetts! Do you know his nickname? The apple crisp that I helped make was delicious! How did you like my straw trick? The one where I drew an apple and taped it on the straw and on the other side I taped the tree I drew. When you move the straw fast between your hands it looks like the apple is on the tree!

Some other activities that might happen during the day are singing (a favorite song is APPLE sung to the tune of BINGO), yoga to help us to think and get ready for a new activity, board games, sand table, painting, block corner, listening center, and house

corner. Sometimes after lunch we have relaxation/quiet time. The lights are shut off, soft music plays and there is a choice of books, tracing, puzzles or clay. These activities are done quietly.

This has been a long newsletter but I wanted you to have an idea of how hard I work all day in school. Sometimes I'm too tired to talk to you right after school so maybe I could talk at supper. I like my new friends and I guess I will get use to the work. I hear October is a fun month so I plan on staying around.

Happy September birthday to Jack Belding.

Love,  
Your New Kindergartner