

December 2004

momentviews

Forget All That Stuff:

text by Kathy Bruce photo by Rachel Brown

Give Your Extended Family a Real Gift

Compile a Casual Family History

**Inside:
Snuggle up with
your children...
Fabulous
Holiday Books**

A few years ago, the adults in my family decided to change the way we gave gifts to each other at Christmas. Our family is growing, and buying gifts presents a considerable financial challenge for some of us. Also, many of us feel like we have plenty of "stuff," and since some of us live far away from others, we don't always know what kind of "stuff" another might need or want if they did want more "stuff."

A few years back, my mother took a creative writing class at her retirement village. She wrote about when she and Daddy met (at a medicine show!). We all loved it, and encouraged her to write more. I've done a bit of family history writing myself, and really value having family stories in writing to pass on to my children. So, I

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MONTVIEWS

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We welcome your comments, photos and submissions. E-mail preferred. Send text to Katiekm@comcast.net; digital photos (please identify all children in photos) to Grindgrafx@earthlink.net. Or, you may put text and photos in the green newsletter submission folder or find the newsletter correspondent in your child's class. See list of committee members below.

Deadlines:

(All on Wednesdays at 3 p.m.)

January 19
March 2
April 6
May 4

Newsletter Committee

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Cars have been ticketed for parking in the Handicap Parking area on Eudora Street, even for unloading. These are \$100 tickets, so fight that urge to park there, even for 5 minutes!



It is the time of year again when opportunistic persons look for easy money, so please lock up everything out of sight - even for 5 minutes (the time it took for the school's laptop to be stolen from the office ...).



The end-of-year holidays are upon us! As a mom, I am really working on keeping the holidays fun and not filled with anxiety about perfect gifts, perfect meals, perfect decorations, perfect days. "Perfect" holidays are a lot to live up to - for my family now, and for my daughter as she grows up.



I am always thankful to be working here in this amazing community of families (staff families included!). Hope you all have a fun Thanksgiving!

—Martha

PS. Go ahead and buy a pie crust ... no one will know ...

www.montviewpreschool.org

from our director

Fostering Independence In Our Children

Recently I heard a researcher talk about "helicopter moms." These are the mothers who do everything for their children, who shelter them from any disappointment and who respond immediately and obediently to any demand. The researcher believes that with the advent of reliable birth control in the early 60's, women could control the size of their family. With fewer children more evenly spaced, parents have the luxury of more time for nurturing their children. This is certainly not all bad. However, in our current culture, more and more of us qualify as "helicopter moms" who constantly hover over our children.

I'd like to urge you to think about the importance of independence. You will not always be there to fill every pothole in the road of life. Are you giving your child the gift of independence and a sense of competence? One easy way to do this is to let your child walk in and out of school. Almost every child who comes to school is able to do this and yet we see parents carrying their preschoolers everywhere. If for no other reason that the health of your back, put your child down!

Let your child learn to put on her own clothing including shoes, socks and outerwear. I'm amazed at kids who seem unable to put on their own socks. Let your child speak for himself. He is working to develop the skill of conversation and no one expects mastery.

Stand back and let your child resolve some of her own conflicts. Your willingness to let her work through things strongly demonstrates your confidence in her. How empowering!

Please, let your child want for something. You may be able to purchase every toy and video he asks for, but are you depriving him of the joy of anticipation, of longing for and of earning something? Even with all the financial resources in the world, you will not be able to purchase the perfect spouse or job for your child.

As educators, we work hard to nurture independence. Please help us give this gift to your child.

Teacher Gifts

I am often asked for suggestions regarding teacher gifts. While none of the staff expects anything, we are cognizant of the wishes of children and their parents to acknowledge that special teacher. Gift certificates are always welcome. Local restaurants, coffee shops, bookstores (Tattered Cover and Bookies are very special.), and Target are favorite spots of most teachers. Movie passes are useful as well. Some of the staff like massages or manicures, but others do not. If you need me to check in with staff on this, I am happy to do so. Many classes will go together to purchase a gift, but we hope no one feels pressured to be involved.

Playground Safety

Our original mission when we built the play area was to have it be a community playground so I love to see all the adults and children playing out there after school. I do want to remind the adults that they are responsible for the safety of their children especially the very young ones. Please keep your child in sight. Also, please remember, no pets of any kind on the playground or tied to the fence. We are in the process of making some modifications in the fence and the gate. Please bear with us while we complete the work.

Kindergarten Applications

The Dec 15th date for kindergarten application is fast approaching. We have had an enormous amount of interest in the program so I urge you to respect the deadline. If you wish to set up an observation, please contact Abby or Lisi. We do guarantee a spot in the Montview kindergarten for all Montview preschoolers who get their applications in by the deadline. Financial aid questions regarding kindergarten should be directed to Heidi Van Sickle.

Cover:

Kindergartener Hannah Ginsberg shows off her bouquet.

Photo by Rachel Brown

Right:

Abby tries on a wig for Halloween in Leigh Ann Metscher's classroom. Photo by Leigh Ann Metscher.



Cover Story

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encouraged our family to write for Christmas. Two years ago we chose a topic, something simple, a Christmas memory, and each of the adults who wanted to—my sister, my nieces and nephews, my mother, all of us, wrote a memory of Christmas that was special to each of us. One of my nieces compiled all the pieces and we each got a copy. We all felt this was one of the most meaningful gifts we had ever received. So last year we did it again. We wrote on the topic of family and food. I wrote about making candy with my mother when I was a little girl. This time my nephew's wife compiled all the stories. We got more submissions the second time. More in-laws participated. My son Sam wrote a piece about Dairy Queen ice cream. And a couple of the younger ones drew pictures.

This year one of my nieces suggested an annotated holiday recipe collection. I sent in my fudge recipe and some stories about its fame. I know my sister will do spritz cookies. She's just got to. I can't wait to see what everyone else sends in.

And I have an idea for next year. I'd like each of us to choose someone in our family who is no longer living and write about our memories of that person.

We are collecting a written family history. Each year another chapter is added. Each person can write as much or as little as they like. Some of the one-paragraph submissions have been some of the best. This way, the burden of compiling a complete family history is spread amongst us all, and no one feels overwhelmed. A different person volunteers to compile and distribute each year. The more we read each other's submissions, the more we want to write, even those who swore they just weren't good writers. And as much as I value this book we are compiling, I know how much more valuable this treasure will be for my children someday. I would have loved having such a collection about my grandparents and other relatives.

If you're looking for something different to do with family giving, I urge you to give this a try. It is truly a gift of love that will continue to give long after we're gone.

I am including, as an example, a piece my niece's husband, Kyle, submitted for the food and family edition of our book. It's one of my favorites and exemplifies how something very short and simple can be an excellent contribution to family history.

Wild Dog Salad

By Kyle Newman

When I was probably in the second or third grade, I remember telling my mother about a dish that I had at school that I really liked and wanted her to make for me. When she asked me what it was called, I told her "Wild Dog Salad." She told me that she didn't know how to make that, but I don't remember if she kept a straight face or not. I would forget about it for a while until we had it again at school and I would ask Mom if she figured it out yet. One day she finally asked, "What is in Wild Dog Salad?" I replied, "Well, it's got apples, raisins, nuts ..." It was then that she realized I was talking about Waldorf salad.

Snuggle up with your children

Fabulous Holiday Books

By Kathy Bruce

Favorite Thanksgiving books

Over The River and Through the Woods

by Lydia Maria Child, illustrated by Nadine Bernard Wescott.

I wouldn't think of going through the Thanksgiving season without singing this song with my kids — at school and at home. I love the song, and I love Nadine Bernard Wescott's illustrations. Her pictures are both whimsical and warm. They tell a wonderful Thanksgiving story that captures beautifully both old-fashioned traditions and the modern family. This is my all time number one favorite Thanksgiving book.

A Turkey for Thanksgiving

by Eve Bunting.

This is a funny and sweet story about a group of animal friends who are determined to have a turkey for Thanksgiving. The turkey in question is determined not to be eaten. All ends well when the turkey realizes that the friends want to have him as their guest at the table, not as their main course.

The Firefighter's Thanksgiving

by Maribeth Boelts.

This is a new one I found this year. It is a great book for those who are interested in firefighters in particular or action in general. However, it is a lovely story for all children. It covers the lives of a group of firefighters manning their station on Thanksgiving Day. They are attempting to make a Thanksgiving dinner for themselves in between calls, which turns out to be difficult. This story has a lovely ending that exemplifies the meaning of Thanksgiving.

Favorite Hanukkah books

Hershel and the Hanukkah Goblins

by Eric Kimmel.

This is our all time number one favorite Hanukkah book. Our hardback copy is so worn that I really need to purchase a new one. In this story, a small town is plagued by goblins that prevent the villagers from celebrating Hanukkah. A traveler, Hershel, passes through and offers to get rid of the goblins. How Hershel goes about outsmarting the goblins is both exciting and comical. The king of the goblins might be a little scary for very young or sensitive child, so check this one out first before reading it aloud to your children. At my house, it wouldn't be Hanukkah without Hershel.



(continued next page)



Holiday Books

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Latkes and Applesauce

by Fran Manushkin.

This is a sweet story about a family snowed in for Hanukkah. Their potatoes and apples are covered by deep snow out in the garden, and the favorite holiday meal of latkes and applesauce seems impossible to make until some unexpected visitors (a dog and a cat) save the day.

The runaway Dreidel

by Leslea Newman.

A dreidel starts spinning and just won't stop. A little boy follows it all through the town, along with family and friends. Kyrsten Brooker's illustrations are what draw me to this book. They are wonderful. Nice rhyming text, too.

ZigaZak

by Eric Kimmel.

This is Eric Kimmel's follow up the Hershel and the Hanukkah Goblins. I still like Hershel best, but this one is good, too. More goblins, bewitching the dreidels and the latkes and wreaking havoc on Hanukkah, are finally outwitted by a wise and crafty rabbi.

Favorite Christmas Books

The Night Tree

by Eve Bunting.

This is one of my all time number one favorite Christmas stories. A family embarks on their yearly tradition of decorating "their" tree in the forest. They decorate it with edible treats for the birds and squirrels and other creatures of the forest. This is a warm and sweet and beautiful book. Please don't miss it.

Santa's Book of Names

by David McPhail.

A little boy receives an offer from Santa to ride with him on his sleigh and help him match gifts to each child by referring to Santa's book of names. The only problem is that the little boy has been struggling to learn to read, without success, and must admit to Santa that he cannot help him because he can't read. Santa asks him to come anyway, and magical things happen.

Morris's Disappearing Bag

by Rosemary Wells.

I love Rosemary Wells and I think this is my favorite of her books. Morris's older brother and sister get wonderful Christmas gifts which they will not share with Morris because he's too little. But when Morris discovers an overlooked gift under the tree, and opens it to find a disappearing bag, his troubles are over. I have been longing for a disappearing bag for myself ever since I discovered this book.

Polar Express

by Chris Van Allsberg.

This beautiful, magical book is not to be missed at Christmas. A lucky little boy gets to ride on the polar express train full of children all going to the



North Pole to witness Santa's departure and the giving of the first Christmas gift. I still put a bell in the bottom of Sam's stocking every year since the first time we read this book together, and I will be reading this book each Christmas long after my children have grown and moved away.

Peter Spier's Christmas.

This is a classic Peter Spier book. It is wordless, so it works well for very young children, but it is equally enticing for older kids, too. It covers just about every classic detail of family preparations for the Christmas season. This book, like most of Spier's, can be looked at again and again and again, each time revealing details that were missed the last time through.

The Night Before Christmas

by Clement C. Moore, illustrated by Anita Lobel.

There are many versions of this classic story. Please include one in your holiday reading. I like the version illustrated by Anita Lobel.

Christmas in the Country

by Cynthia Rylant.

This is a lovely book that presents a country Christmas long on tradition, love, and fun, and short on commercialism. It's a return to the simpler times, but made accessible to contemporary readers by Diane Goode's fun illustrations.

The Twelve days of Christmas

illustrated by Jan Brett

My kids love trying to remember all the verses of this song. Having a book is handy. I like Jan Brett's illustrations, but there are many versions of this book, too. Find one you like and put an end to the arguments about whether it's nine drummers drumming or nine lords a leaping.

John Flanagan, Ari Woods, Liam Hare, Aidan Judd, Jeremy Green, Johan Dellgren doing field journal work on a walk to Forest Parkway, Kathy Bruce's am class. Photo by Kathy Bruce.

Angel Pig and the Hidden Christmas

by Jan Waldron, illustrated by David McPhail.

This story told in rhyme, and illustrated wonderfully by David McPhail, tells what happens to siblings (who happen to be pigs) when they discover they are out of money and can't afford Christmas gifts or decorations. They are in despair until an angel pig visits them and reminds them that Christmas is not about buying, but rather about giving. The pigs are inspired to use their imagination and creativity to make the best and most meaningful Christmas ever, and they have a blast doing it.

Olive the other Reindeer by J. Otto Seibold. This one is quirky, but I like it. Olive is a dog who, upon hearing the song about Rudolf, in particular the line, "all of the other reindeer," misunderstands and thinks the line is "Olive the other reindeer." Olive is surprised to learn that she must really be a reindeer, and she sets off to the North Pole to help pull Santa's sleigh.

Christmas and Hanukkah

The Trees of the Dancing Goats

by Patricia Polacco.

This is an absolutely beautiful story that makes a great holiday read aloud. As a Trisha's family is preparing for Hanukkah, they learn of the plight of their neighbors, all of whom contract scarlet fever as an epidemic sweeps through their town. Upon hearing of their neighbors' misfortune, including their inability to prepare any kind of Christmas celebration, Trisha's family wonders what they might do to help. They come up with a wonderful idea which exemplifies the spirit of Christmas and of Hanukkah.

Light the Lights

by Margaret Moorman.

Emma's family celebrates Hanukkah and Christmas. She and her father polish the menorah. Emma and her mother decorate the Christmas tree. This is great book for families who, like my own, celebrate both of these winter holidays.



Auction Donations Due

Help Create A Bright Future for Montview

By Jenni Rodriguez

Rise and Shine. Plans for "A Future so Bright," Montview's largest fundraiser, are underway. When you're marking your calendar for helping days, don't forget February 26, your annual auction. This is a night reserved for our community to celebrate our school, raise funds and have fun!

The Auction is Montview's primary fundraiser for scholarships. Montview welcomes children of all social and economic backgrounds. Auction profits make it possible for all these children to enrich our community. And the profits also fund big projects such as playground updates.

This year's Auction theme, "A Future so Bright," embodies Montview's commitment to our children. Parents make this event happen. By now families are securing donations (four per family). We also are offering a \$200 buy-out. Instead of soliciting donors, you make a cash donation. All items are tax deductible. Participating in the Auction is your opportunity to give directly to your child and the children in our community.

Yes, we ask our parents to give time and effort towards the auction. It is a lot of work and we have a great time.

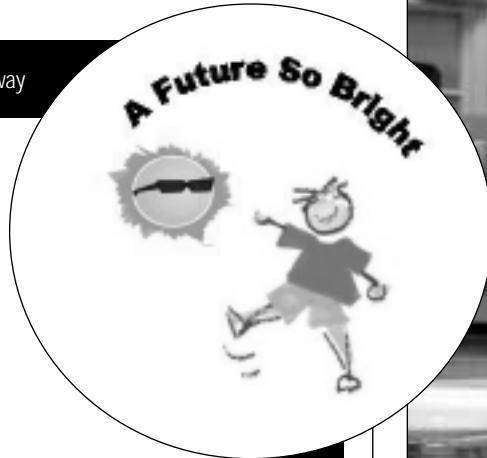
Ann Davis and Jenni Rodriguez, our co-chairs this year welcome your ideas and questions.

Donor forms are outside Martha's office. The more we participate, the more funds we raise! If you have some of your forms completed, we'll take them now and the rest later.

HELP: We are looking for an auction night MC. If you know someone who would be interested let us know! Thanks.

Auction Timeline

- Dec. 6 : Auction donor contracts due
- Feb 14-25: Items will be dropped off at a designated location.
Tickets go on sale
- Feb. 26 : Auction Night



Mick Poppert pounds a hammer at the new workbench.

Photo by Leigh Ann Metscher.

from the classroom

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Workbench brings happy hammering to Leigh Ann's class

Leigh Ann Metscher's classroom is sporting a beautiful new workshop courtesy of Aram Neuschatz and his son Tyler who is in Leigh Ann and Bernadette's class. Tyler's mom, Caroline, also helped with the project. The workbench is especially wonderful because it has built-in storage space beneath it for all the wood-working tools, freeing up other space nearby.

The class recently went on a big adventure. They took the RTD bus downtown to the Hyatt to decorate cookies with a chef. They got to have snack there and see the tank where the hotel keeps trout that they serve in their restaurant. The children learned that the Hyatt serves 5,000 meals a day.

Leigh Ann's favorite aspect of Montview is that the program is play-based. "I think that as a society we are losing sight of the importance of imaginative play in our children's lives. And it is so important! Kids learn so much through play. Play provides practice in choosing, doing and problem-solving."

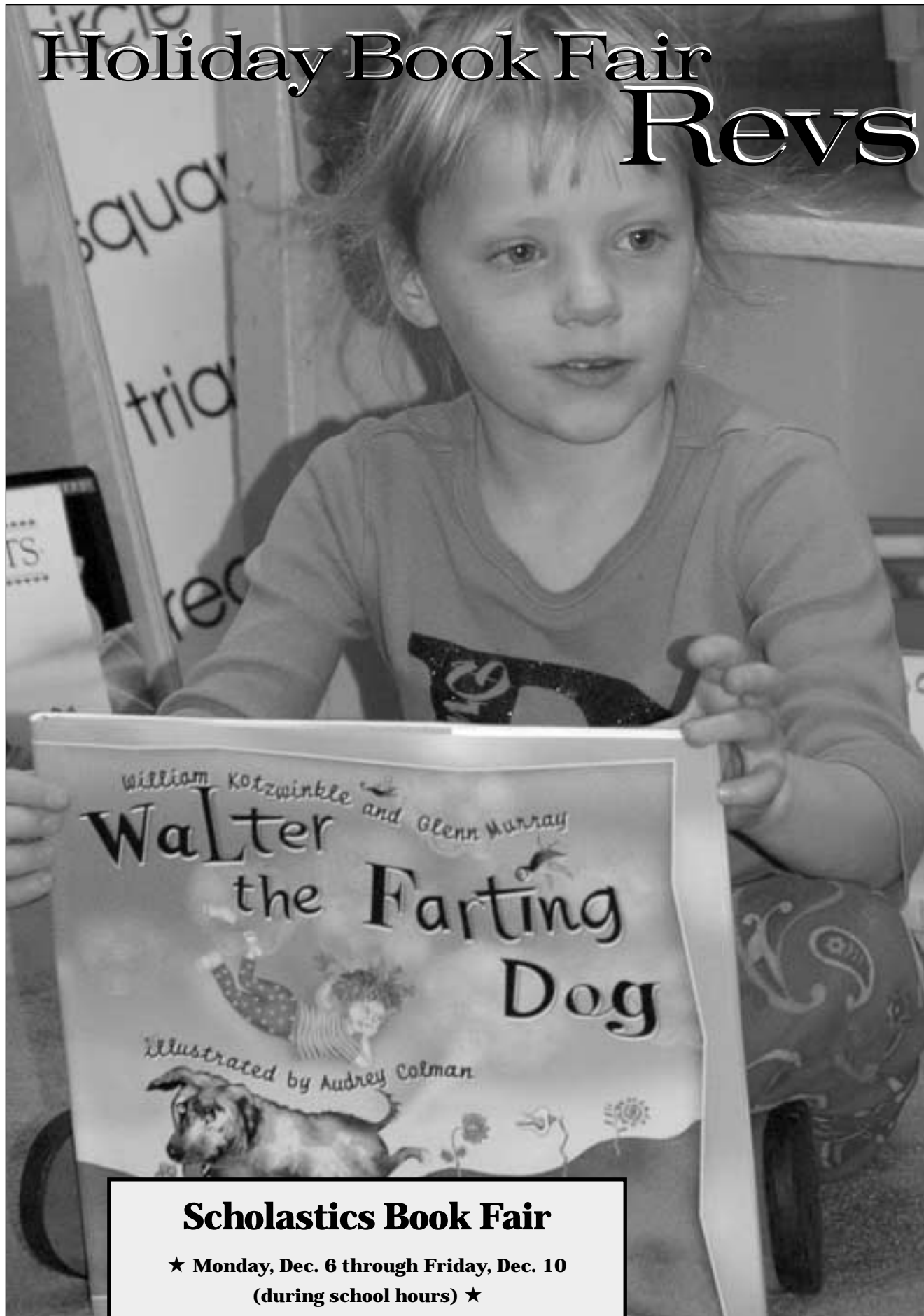
Leigh Ann likes the way children construct their own rules and learn at their own pace at Montview.

"Play also fosters language skills as children negotiate roles, set up a structure and interact in their respective roles. They gain more sophisticated communication skills and learn about social rules as natural outcomes of their play," Leigh Ann said.

"By setting up a supportive and inviting environment, adults let children take initiative, explore, play, learn and experience the thrill of discovery. This is a critical link between play and more formal learning," she said. "Children who know the excitement of seeking out new information and finding things out for themselves also love to learn!"

Holiday Book Fair Revs Up

By Susan Jenkins



Scholastics Book Fair

★ Monday, Dec. 6 through Friday, Dec. 10
(during school hours) ★

★ Sunday, Dec. 12: 11:45 a.m. to 2 p.m. ★

★ Family PJ Party: Dec. 9 from 6 to 8 p.m. ★

★ Cash, Check, Master Card, Visa, Discover
and American Express accepted. ★

Above:

Zara Nuss shares her favorite book with the kindergarten class. Photo by Rachel Brown.

Below:

Layla and Isabella Riedell, Meghan MacLaren, Jeremy Green, Morgan Naake from Kathy Bruce's am class, at Botanic Gardens.

Photo by Kathy Bruce.

Have you lost the "Happy" in your "Holidays" as a result of the shopping frenzy that seems to dominate the season? Well, take heart. The Annual Scholastics Book Fair is coming just in time to solve all your holiday shopping dilemmas!

The Book Fair will be held from Monday, Dec. 6 through Friday, Dec. 10. The Fair will be held in the Church Library, just down the stairs past Martha's office. Montview parents will be staffing the fair from 9 to 11:45 am and from 12:45 to 3:30 pm. There will also be a Family Pajama Party on Thursday, Dec. 9 from 6-8 p.m. Entertainment will be provided for the kids downstairs in the Cellar (down the hall, past the Gates Room) so their parents can shop for holiday surprises. It's even been rumored that Clifford the Big Red Dog may show up for holiday hugs and photos! And if you can't make it during the school week, the Book Fair will also be open Sunday, Dec. 12 from 11:45 am to 2 p.m. Payment can be made with cash, check, Master Card, Visa, Discover and American Express.

Scholastics provides a wide range of books for every budget and age group. You will be able to find all sorts of great gift ideas for everyone on your list. Some pre-school favorites include the new book out by David Shannon, Alice the Fairy and a rather timely story, Duck for President, by Doreen Cronin, the same author of Click, Clack, Moo. As always, there will be a selection of seasonal books, like Snowmen at Night, by Carolyn Buehner and Polar Express, by Chris Van Allsburg. There will also be a variety of reading and activity books for older children. What better gift to give than the gift of a book?

And speaking of giving books as gifts, your child's teacher will have the opportunity to browse the fair and select several books that she would like in the classroom. These will be in the Teacher's Wish List area. What better way to show your gratitude to your child's teacher for all her hard work than with a book? Plus, you are supporting Montview. There will also be Gift Certificates for sale the week prior to the Book Fair. These can be purchased for your child's teacher (or even your child, with your help) to use during the Book Fair. Gift Certificates will be for sale at the top of the main stairs during school hours.

In keeping with the holiday spirit of giving, Montview is also sponsoring a Book Drive to coincide with the Book Fair. So clear your shelves for some new books and bring in your donations from Nov. 29- Dec. 10. Or buy a book for the Book Drive at the Fair and add it to the Collections Box.

Thank you!
Thank you!
Thank you!

Many thanks to Meg Shomp, a parent in Edie and Betty Jo's class, for donating puzzles and plastic cars and trucks to the school.

▲ ▲ ▲

And, a big thanks to Aram Neuschatz for building the beautiful new workbench for room 212. He was ably assisted in the construction project by Tyler who is enrolled in Leigh Ann and Bernadette's class and Tyler's mom Caroline. Stop by the room and see this piece of furniture. It's so grand.



Money Smarts

By Kim McGrigg

Surviving the Holidays Without Going Broke

Most people who experience financial trouble because of overspending during the holidays will tell you that the resulting debt is no way to begin the New Year. While it is easy to get caught up in holiday sales and incentives, if consumers establish guidelines for shopping and other expenses, the end result will be a more enjoyable holiday season—free from the worries of credit and debt problems due to overspending.

Following are some tips for surviving the holidays debt-free:

Know what it all costs. When preparing your holiday spending plan, realize that the holidays involve many more expenses than just gifts. In fact, studies show that consumers budget more than \$500 for non-gift expenses such as travel, entertaining and decorations. Don't forget the incidentals such as postage, charitable donations and babysitting.

Know who's on your gift list. American Express' "Holiday Confessions" poll found that three out of every four adults purchase presents for themselves when shopping for friends and family. Proper planning could help you stick to your gift list.

Get creative. Get the family together to string popcorn and cranberries to make garlands for the tree. Instead of giving store-bought gifts, make homemade jam, knit a scarf, or assemble a photo album. Give vouchers good for ten back rubs or a weekend of baby-sitting.

Help the less fortunate. Instead of buying gifts for the people on your list this year, consider making a donation (in their name) to a local charity. It will make holiday shopping easier and less expensive, while contributing to a good cause. Also try using your holiday spirit on activities such as gift wrapping for a charity or volunteering at a local food bank.

Plan for pay-off. If you must use credit, only use those cards or accounts with the lowest interest rates and most advantageous re-payment plans. Set a goal for paying off any holiday debt in a reasonable amount of time. Keep in mind that a \$1,000 charge can take more than 12 years to pay-off if your interest rate is 17 percent and you make only the minimum monthly payment.

Finally, when you finish your shopping, stop! Sometimes it's hard to resist the "one extra little gift," however, even small items can add up to be budget-breakers. Remember, there's more to the holiday season than shopping.

In addition to being a Montview mom, Kim McGrigg is a financial advice columnist and writer. In the past two years, she has answered more than 20,000 individual consumer inquiries on topics ranging from repossession to refinancing. As a public relations representative for Money Management International/CCCS, she has conducted more than 500 media interviews with outlets such as Reuters, the Arizona Republic and Newsweek.

Kindergartener Annabel Tagawa munches on a grape. Photo by Rachel Brown

NO-COST FUNDRAISING REMINDERS

Purchase grocery coupons either through a standing order filled on the 1st or 15th of the month (fill-out order form or e-mail jjoram@qwest.net with amount and continuing date or walk-in to the Montview office. Grocery coupons are available for King Soopers (Safeway accepts these) or Wild Oats.

Pick-up an Albertson's card in the office. This card allows you to pay for your groceries any way you want. Just swipe the card after you purchase your groceries and Montview will receive a percentage of the sale.

Register with www.eScrip.com, designate Montview Preschool and Kindergarten as the group you wish to support and then use the card when buying from participating merchants. Merchant lists are available on-line. WILD OATS & SAFEWAY accept eScrip!

Register with www.schoolpop.com, designate Montview Preschool and Kindergarten as the group you wish to support and then use the card when buying from participating merchants from this portal. You can also purchase gift cards from this site from many stores (JC Penney, Kmart, Kohl's, Target, Mervyn's (via Target), Nordstroms, Walmart and Sam's Club (via Walmart). Gift cards can be used like cash in the Company's stores or on its website.

Register your family or friends on eScrip or Schoolpop. They can designate Montview as the group they are supporting.

We are signed up for eScrip recycling. We need your used inkjet, laser and toner cartridges, and cell phones. For each of these items, Montview will receive cash. Just remember to bring your used items to school and place them in the black container with the recycling sign, located outside the Montview office. If you work in an office, please recycle the used toner cartridges from printers or copy machines.



Get Out There

Great Adventures With The Family by Cheryl Zens

Winter will be arriving soon and the holidays are right around the corner. If you are like me, you say "yikes" and wonder, "where did the year go?" The holidays can signify different things for everybody, but spending time with family is one priority in everybody's life. So pack up the kids, cook up a bag of kettle corn popcorn, mix up some hot cocoa and treasure a day or evening ice-skating with the family.

Cherry Creek North Outdoor Ice Rink

On November 26th, at Denver's Fillmore Plaza, the Cherry Creek North Ice Rink will be opening until mid-January. The ambience is a winter wonderland with an outdoor ice-skating rink surrounded by white lights and holiday décor.

Location: 2 nd and Fillmore in Cherry Creek North , Denver, CO 80206

Hours: Sunday – Thursday 11 a.m to 6 p.m.
Friday – Saturday 11 a.m. to 11 p.m.

Cost: \$6 for adults ; \$3 for children; Skate Rental: \$2

Joy Burns Ice Arena/Indoor Ice Rink

The Joy Burns Arena offers public ice skating sessions throughout the year. The Arena hosts holiday and special event sessions with extra activities, giving everyone the opportunity to enjoy skating for the fun and exercise.

Location: Ritchie Center at University of Denver, 2201 E. Asbury Avenue, Denver, CO 80208

Hours: Hours vary so call 303-871-3904 or check the website at www.recreation.du.edu/ice for scheduled open skate hours.

Cost: \$5 for adults (12-64); \$4 for children (2-11); 10-session passes available at discounted rate ; Skate Rental: \$2

Big Bear Ice Arena/Indoor Ice Rink

Located in a renovated B-52 maintenance hangar, Big Bear Ice Arena made its home in the old Lowry Air Force Base building. The facility, open year-round, is a family entertainment center with two indoor ice rinks.

Location: 8580 Lowry Blvd, Denver, CO 80230

Hours: Hours vary so call 303-343-1111 or check the website at www.bigbearice.com for scheduled open skate hours.

Cost: \$5 for adults (12-64); \$4 for children (17 years of age and younger); Special rates may apply for groups of ten or more.; Skate Rental: \$3

Kettle Corn Popcorn Recipe

1/2 cup of popcorn

1/3 cup of oil

1/2 cup of sugar

1 teaspoon salt

Use a theater popper or crank popper available at home stores like Bed Bath & Beyond or Crate & Barrel. Preheat your stove burner to just slightly above medium. Pour the oil in the popper and add the popcorn, sugar and salt. Place the lid on. Put on stove and start turning the handle. Don't stop turning it until the popping has almost completely stopped. The popping time is approximately five minutes. If the burner is too hot, adjust the burner because the popcorn burns easily. One suggestion is place an oven mit on the hand holding the popper top.

Homemade Hot Cocoa

(worth the 5 minutes it takes to make)

1/2 cup sugar

1/4 cup cocoa powder

dash of salt

1/3 cup hot water

4 cups milk
(if you want to live it up, use whole milk)

3/4 teaspoon vanilla

Mix sugar, cocoa and salt in a saucepan. Stir in water. Cook and stir over medium heat until mixture boils and stir about 1 minute. Stir in milk and heat. Do Not Boil. Remove from heat and add vanilla. Top with marshmallows or whipping cream.

Henry Weaver, Charlie Franks and Jack Koskinen hide in the leaves. Photo by Rachel Brown.

