

# handprints

APRIL  
2012

All systems go at the Challenger Space Museum, March 2012.



## Preschool/K News and Notes

We've started our space study! We've discussed ideas about outer space, talked about our solar system and read about the first six planets. We've started singing space songs and creating art, too. Thanks to Chris (Sammi's dad) for joining us one morning. He brought his banjo to play songs we had been singing.

Harmony's annual Science Fair was a fun family night! Thanks to all

children for participating. There were great projects and many interesting displays throughout the building. It was a great evening of science and shared learning for all!

Our St. Patrick's Day celebration was full of green, sneaky leprechauns who tricked us by messing up our rooms! They overturned chairs, sprinkled glitter, turned things upside down and spilled our lessons out

onto the floor! The leprechauns left a note for the preschool/k classes about bags of gold hidden on the playground.

It was a day of celebrating fun and creative imaginations!

Our field trips to the Challenger Space Museum were interesting and exciting! We learned about a space shuttle that did not make a successful journey into space. We also learned that your body stretches a few inches, your head gets bigger and your stomach and intestines push up into your chest in space. We saw a laboratory, put on special glasses to see colors in the dark and watched a movie about Earth. Some classes saw a space musical while others got to fly airplanes on computers.

The trike- and bike-a-thon for the American Heart Association was thirty minutes of fun, laughter and exercise. The children can realllllllyyy ride. Thanks to all for the generous fundraising donations!





## Elementary News and Notes

Our recent studies have been exciting and varied. Students worked and learned so much from their science fair trials and successes, and loved presenting them to one another in class. Our “guest judges” (Ranger Jay and Tom Mancke) visited to hear from each student about their experiment. It was great for the students to discuss their experiments with friendly, curious visitors to our class.

Our art museum field trip was an adventure. We started with lunch by the fountain then toured the Painting America the Beautiful exhibit. Afterward, we created collages in the studio. Older students also took a trip to the Region Two Science Fair to see all the great experiments. We also enjoyed a visit from USC students who shared helpful information about nutrition.



Terra Nova testing is April 17-19. This once-a-year testing gives students the experience of taking a standardized test, which is a useful life skill. We will also have field trips in April including a trip to hear Jazz music on April 11 and the read-in at the State House April 12.

Students have worked steadily on their individual studies in language, math and natural history. First-year students began handwriting using cursive. All the students enjoyed creating Venn Diagrams, which show

logical relationships between sets of things. Map studies have inspired many drawings of the classroom, garden area and side yard.

We ended March with an exciting day of egg hiding and hunting. After the elementary students hid eggs for the preschool and kindergarten students, they were surprised with an egg hunt of their own in the always-beloved side yard. We also enjoyed weaving paper baskets and coloring boiled eggs using red cabbage and algae natural dyes.





april	showers	green	warm
	<p><b>4/11</b> Say cheese! It's picture day for all students!</p> <p><b>4/19</b> Children's Theatre Field Trips: Debbie's class leaves 8:50 am and Ashley's class leaves 10:30 am</p>	<p><b>4/17-4/20</b> Terra Nova Testing in the Elementary. Remember: there are no make-up days.</p> <p><b>4/20</b> Children's Theatre Field Trip: Carroll's class leaves 8:50 am</p>	<p><b>4/9, 16 or 23</b> Telescope viewing at USC's Melton Observatory, 8 pm</p> <p><b>4/25</b> Poetry Night, 7-8 pm. All students and families welcome to attend!</p>

### Stargazing at Melton Observatory

The Melton Observatory on the USC campus is open every Monday night 30 minutes after sundown. Alex (the director at Melton) suggested we come as a group on any of the Monday evenings if it is a clear night. Just for your reference, the planets Venus, Jupiter and Mars are currently visible. Saturn will be visible after 9 pm on the April 16 and 23. The Moon will be visible only on April 2 and very briefly on April 23.

### Registration and Fees

**Completed registration packets for 2012-13 are due by Tuesday, April 10.** They were emailed before spring break and are on the school website. **Students' summer field trip fees (\$100 per student) are due by Tuesday, April 10.** This fee is for any student attending the summer program.

### Personalized Artwork Orders

On Friday 3/30, parents should have received information on how to order products displaying their child's original artwork. The students worked very hard to produce beautiful pictures for this project and we are so excited to offer this fundraising opportunity to the parents. Please review the materials and turn in your completed order forms by Monday, April 9. These items are very popular and will be back in time for Mother's Day!

### Bike & Trike for Heart Association

Lots of fun, laughter and photos! Here's a link to the pictures: <http://animoto.com/play/1XDk8QGvdJ1ErmbLraXiQ> You can continue to fundraise for the American Heart Association

### Happy Birthday to You!

Henri Ann 4/3  
Shannon McDonald 4/14  
Katie Stafford 4/17  
Madison Morris 4/20  
Leslie Farris 4/21  
Debbie Holmes 4/22  
Gerritt Degood 4/30

online via [www.heart.org/jump](http://www.heart.org/jump) and/or turn in donation envelopes until Friday. Thanks to everyone for participating!

### Cookie Money

The students chose The Earth and Space Endowment as the recipient of their cookie money for the month of March. The Earth and Space Foundation supports important scientific research around the world including expeditions to help protect the rainforests, coral reefs and other fragile resources. They have also studied life in extreme environments so we can better understand life on other worlds. Additional information can be found on their website at [www.earthandspace.org](http://www.earthandspace.org)

The emotional connection between children (and adults) and color is well known, but when it comes to food, this isn't always a good thing. The bright colors of grocery store foods are often the result of artificial food dyes, which are now being applied not just to candies and snack foods, but also to products such as pickles, salad dressing and even oranges and orange juice. With names such as Red #40, Blue #2, and Yellow #5, artificial dyes have been found to be linked directly to behavioral problems in children, such as hyperactivity and hypersensitivity. More research shows artificial food colors may lead to "neurobehavioral toxicity." ([Meta-analysis of double-blind, placebo-controlled trials](#) by David W. Schab, assistant clinical professor of psychiatry at Columbia University).

According to the *Washington Post*:

"Beyond the behavioral problems and cancer risks, the greatest hazard that dyes pose for children may also be the most obvious: They draw kids away from nutritious foods and toward brightly colored processed products that are high in calories but low in nutrients, such as fruit-flavored drinks and snack foods. Those types of foods are a major force in America's obesity epidemic."

The food industry relies on the emotional attraction to brightly colored, fun foods for kids, and advertise accordingly. If we were to find the same level of excitement in commercials and advertisements about fruits and vegetables as we do with all of the fun, cool snacks that are out there, then your child would likely be more encouraged to eat their fruits and vegetables vs. the other processed snacks. However, since we don't, it's up to us as parents to provide that encouragement, fun and excitement to eat the more nutritious snacks. Educate them about why it is important to eat wholesome food as well, since this will provide a strong foundation of healthy eating that they can carry with them into adulthood.

Choosing naturally colorful foods will add key nutrients to your child's diet. Getting the proper nutrients now is important to a growing child as nutrition plays a huge role in ensuring future health. We invest time and energy in their playtime, education, and extracurricular activities for our children, but we shouldn't forget about the importance of protecting and investing in their health. What they eat now will have a direct and indirect impact on their current and future health and wellness.

For a child accustomed to eating primarily fun, brightly colored snack foods, it can be challenging to get them excited about fruits and vegetables. So how to get that picky eater to pick up the bright orange carrot instead of the bright orange goldfish cracker? Start small. Don't expect to change your child's eating habits overnight. One idea is to phase out one favorite at a time. Aim to work toward having a pantry/refrigerator without artificial colors. If it isn't there, your child won't eat it.

Take Goldfish crackers as an example. Once they are gone, stop buying them. Natural brands (Annie's is one) can assist with phasing out more slowly. While they are still processed, they are a better option to keep as a small treat alongside those

carrots or mini oranges as you phase out processed snacks. Our bodies know what's best for us, so as artificial foods are replaced with natural, wholesome foods, you may find over time your child prefers the more natural, wholesome foods.

Some fun ideas:

- Kids love dips, and using dips is a great way to encourage them to eat more vegetables.
- They also love fun shapes, cut the fruit and veggies into fun shapes to encourage them to eat more or try something new.
- They also make child friendly knives (Montessori has some good ones) that will get your children involved in the kitchen. They will be more likely to eat it if they participated in making it.
- Use toothpicks, make veggie animals on their plate, and/or make fruit or veggie kabobs
- Raw veggies are best, but if you cook them, don't overcook them. Kids are more likely to turn away an overcooked vegetable vs. a brightly colored, lightly steamed one. Blanching your green beans or asparagus (1-3 minutes in boiling water), or lightly steaming not only keeps them crisp and crunchy, but retains most nutrients as well. Items like broccoli are sweeter when purchased organic and raw vs frozen. Some kids won't eat frozen broccoli but will eat lightly steamed broccoli.
- If you have a blender, blend some nutritious smoothies that incorporate fruits and veggies, or make veggie purees to add into other recipes.

Some examples:

**Red:** Apple slices, halved cherry tomatoes on toothpicks, red bell pepper slices, red grapes

**Orange:** Oranges, carrot sticks and ranch, sweet potato chips, mango, peaches

**Yellow:** bananas, yellow bell pepper slices, yellow tomatoes, yellow squash rounds with hummus as a dip

**Green:** sweet peas (kids love to eat the peas out of the pod), cucumber, green beans, broccoli, kale/apple slaw or kale chips, green apples or grapes, avocado slices or as a dip, celery with nut butter (peanut, almond, etc)

**Blue:** blueberries, plums

**Purple:** grapes, plums, eggplant, purple carrot, purple potatoes