



Highlands Highlights

Since 1953

December 2008

A Bounty of Fun

Ho, Ho, Ho! **Santa** is taking time out of his busy schedule to drop by Highlands Preschool for our Winter Holiday Parties!

Mark your calendar for **Wednesday, December 17** for M/T/W classes and **Friday, December 19** for Th/F classes. On these days, our curriculum will be built around the "Winter Holiday" theme, and we'll include some special fun at the end of class.

If they wish, the children may sit on Santa's lap to let him know what's on their list this year! Rest assured, though, that your child will not be

alone if they are uncomfortable with Santa — they may choose not to participate if they wish.



Sign-up sheets to bring treats, water, plates, napkins, etc., will be posted on the bulletin boards. Please sign up to contribute to the fun!

We realize that we have many different cultures and religions attending Highlands Preschool. If you would like to share a treat, a story or a short activity from Hanukkah, Kwanzaa, or any other holiday, please

contact your child's teacher as soon as possible.



Highlands Preschool

Inside This Issue:

Giving Tree Underway	2
Holiday Food Drive!	2
Candle Pick-up Reminder	2
Progress Reports	2
Parent Education Page	3
Look Ahead	3
December Calendar	4

New Music Curriculum

Calling the toddlers of today...the Mozarts of tomorrow! We are very excited to announce that we have a new music curriculum enhancement program. **Jenny Martin** will visit once a month and spend a half hour with each age group, bringing "Little Ditties Music Academy" right to us!

In Little Ditties, through movement and instruments, parachute-play and scarves, children explore the joy of music. Little Ditties is the expression of Jenny Martin's life-long loves of



children and of music. Ms. Jenny is a former elementary school music teacher.

She's played the flute for 18 years, has sung since she was a preschooler and has taught both flute and voice privately for 10 years. Jenny started her Little Ditties business three years ago and has loved working with so many mini-musicians!

Jenny and her husband, Mike, are parents to two children, Matthew and Zachary, who both attend Highlands Preschool.

Highlands Preschool Association

Staff: Teachers

Kathee Baylis
Linda Helt
Shannon MacGillivray
Hillary Morris
Connie White

Registrar Karen Short

Bookkeeper Elizabeth Dompier

Board of Directors: President

Gabrielle Statkus

Vice President

Melanie Gallagher

Giving Tree Underway

Progress Reports

Just before breaking for the holiday, your child will bring home a simple Progress Report, just to let you know how your child is doing in preschool.



These reports are different for each age level, and will simply give you an idea of where your child is at with different skills. Ratings will be either a "G" for Good Progress or a "W" for Working on Skill. Teachers will report to you on such skills as Speaking, Listening, Social /Emotional, Fine Motor Skills, Gross Motor Skills, Work Habits and Reading Readiness.

We want to stress that all children learn these skills at different paces. This report will just give you a chance to see where your child is at now, and then we will give another report at the end of the school year so you can see their progress.

This should not be thought of as a graded "Report Card" in any way, and children will not be sitting through any types of tests. The report will be based on the teacher's experience so far with your child. As always, if you have any questions or concerns, please talk to your child's teacher.

The Community of Christ church has a "Joy of Giving" Tree displayed by the front door.

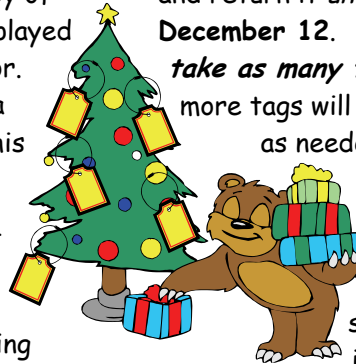
They welcome you to take a tag and help kids in need this holiday season.

Tags are provided by Treehouse, a local non-profit organization which helps at-risk kids right here in King County. Gifts from the tags go directly to local foster kids.

If you wish, simply purchase one or

more of the items listed on the tag and return it *unwrapped* by **Friday, December 12**. *You are welcome to take as many tags as you wish;*

more tags will be hung on the tree as needed.



This is a great opportunity to start teaching your preschooler about sharing with others and helping those in need, while you bring joy to the lives of local foster kids this holiday season!

Holiday Food Drive!

We will have our very own holiday food drive **December 1 through December 12**. We will have boxes placed by the classrooms throughout this period, and donations will go to the Renton Food Bank. Here are a few suggestions to donate:



- Pasta
- Rice
- Beans, lentils (canned or dry)
- Canned tuna fish
- Peanut butter
- Canned fruits and vegetables
- Canned soup
- Infant formula (Enfamil preferred)
- Baby food (no glass containers)
- Macaroni and cheese

Candle Pick-Up Reminder

If you ordered products from our Barn Candle fundraiser

that will need to be picked up, be sure to mark your calendar for **December 10 or December 11**. We will have the candles in the Big Room between the hours

of **10:30 am and 2:15 pm** each of those days. If you cannot make it to the preschool during those hours, you are welcome to arrange to have someone else pick them up for you. Thank you again for your support—we hope you enjoy your Barn Candles!



Parent Education Page

Coping with Holiday Hustle and Bustle

Excerpted from *PreschoolEducation.com*

Families with pre-schoolers can better cope with the hustle and bustle of the holidays by following a few simple tips:

"Keep routines as normal as possible and concentrate on important activities to reduce holiday stress. **Routines** are important for children, so try to maintain normal meal and bedtime schedules even during holiday vacations. Children may feel upset, grouchy or anxious during this busy time; don't expect children to always be happy and appreciative.

"Having a quiet time is also a good idea during the holidays. Play soft

ones, the festive mood won't be hindered, but stress may be eased.

"It's also a good idea to schedule activities over several days so the excitement isn't overwhelming —

for the children or for the parents. Make several short shopping trips instead of one long trip.

Children have short attention spans and little endurance.

"Here are some additional ways to deal with holiday stress:

- Concentrate on people instead of objects. For example, it's more important to have fun making cookies than to have beautiful cookies.
- Prepare children for holiday visits by sharing photos of family members. Discuss who the people are and who the children will see.
- Plan celebrations during children's best coping time of the day.
- Touch people. A loving touch can have the opposite effect of stress because it calms people both physically and emotionally.
- Limit sugar, salt, and caffeine during holiday meals and

music, read stories or take a stroll to bring down your child's activity level. Setting a "whisper hour," a time when

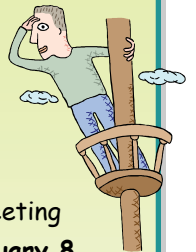
everyone in the house must whisper, is a way to reduce noise and add mystery to the season.

"Parents should select activities most important to the family. By letting go of the less important



Look Ahead

- The Budget Committee will meet on **January 6** at **6 pm**.
- Our next Board meeting will be held on **January 8** at **7 pm** in the Big Room.
- Nancy "Music" Stewart is scheduled for an all-school performance in our Big Room on Wednesday, **January 14** at **10:30 am**. Look for more information in your January newsletter.
- Martin Luther King, Jr. Day is Monday, **January 19**. There will be no school this day.
- We will have Pajama Spirit Days on **January 21** and **23**!



snacks. They may result in the same symptoms as stress.

- Have children help prepare for celebrations by setting the table, cutting out cookies, picking up toys, and designing and coloring placemats.

"By letting children be part of the festivities, the family emphasizes shared joys and responsibilities during their holiday celebration."

December 2008

Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri
1  Tuition due Holiday Food Drive Begins	2	3	4	5
8 	9	10  M/T/W Candle Pick-up	11  Th/F Candle Pick-up	12  Deadlines for Giving Tree and Food Drive Donations
15 	16	17  M/T/W Winter Holiday Parties	18	19  Th/F Winter Holiday Parties
22	23	24	25 	26
NO SCHOOL — Winter Vacation				
29 	30	31	1	2
NO SCHOOL — Winter Vacation				

*Please remember that dates and times are subject to change after printing. Please confirm events with your teacher.



Highlands Preschool

701 Monroe Ave. NE
Renton, WA 98056

Since 1953

425-255-9422

www.highlandspreschool.com

Schedule of Events

- December 1 — November tuition due
- December 1 — Holiday Food Drive begins
- December 10 — M/T/W Barn Candle pick-up, 10:30-2:15
- December 11 — Th/F Barn Candle pick-up, 10:30-2:15
- December 12 — Deadlines for Giving Tree and Food Drive donations
- December 17 — M/T/W Winter Holiday Parties
- December 19 — Th/F Winter Holiday Parties
- December 22-January 2 — NO SCHOOL; Winter Break
- January 5 — Back to school! (Monday)





Highlands Preschool

Classroom News

What's Happening for Preschool 1 in December

Dear Parents,



December is an exciting month for all.

During the month, we will be talking about the changing of the seasons from fall to winter. Why is it getting colder? What are snow and frost?

We will also be working on holiday projects. Some of the projects will teach the kids about patterning and counting for math.



What letter does 'wreath' begin with? What does the letter sound like? What other words begin with the letter 'w'? The letters we will be incorporating into our curriculum will be:

R-Reindeer or Red;
E-Elf;
T-Tree; and
Q-Quiet.

While you are busy shopping for holiday presents, remember that sharing time with your child is the most important gift you can give them.



It's also important to remember that holidays can be very stressful for your child. Please make sure they get plenty of sleep. This way, they will be healthy and happy.

We hope your holidays are filled with joy.

Sincerely,
*Kathee Baylis, Linda Helt
and Hillary Morris*

As always, we work on colors, shapes, and the alphabet.





Classroom News

What's Happening for Preschool 2 & 3 in December

Dear Parents,

December can be an extremely busy time of the year. The

holiday season can be fun, exciting and memorable, but remember that it can cause stress and anxiety in both you and your child because

of all the celebrations, late nights, and shopping. This is a time when parents are often hurried and harried.

Because of all of this, we try to keep this time of year very low key. Our stories, projects, and games are very fun, crea-

tive, and festive, and our holiday projects will incorporate this wonderful season into our themes. We will decorate trees and create several holiday

decorations. We

will also

have our

Winter Holiday Parties

in class, but

those too will be low key.

In December, we will continue with all of the learning objectives of last month, along with matching, sequencing and multiple tasking. The combination of these learning objectives that your child is experiencing at preschool is the beginning phase of pre-reading and comprehen-



sion. These are valuable lessons for your child now and in later life. It has been very exciting to watch your child succeed with each new accomplishment.

May your holidays be filled with love and joy, and may the new year bring happiness and new adventures!



Sincerely,

Mrs. Mac and Mrs. White