

Erin & Ryann's Class

May is here and we are amazed at how quickly this year has flown by! We have seen so much growth and learning occurring in our classroom this year. We are really looking forward to the last few weeks of school and celebrating all of the things the children have accomplished and the friendships that have been formed.

These last few months have been busy! Upon returning to school after Spring Break, we began investigating the term "Cycle" to find out its meaning and where we see it occurring in the world around us. Through various books we have in our classroom, the children discovered that a "cycle" is something that repeats itself over and over again. We began to look for cycles in our environment and discovered they were all around us! (Waking up every morning and going to bed every night is a cycle, the phases of the moon are a cycle and we even talked briefly about the water cycle.) This information brought us onto the topic of animal life cycles. We studied closely the life cycle of chickens and other birds. During discussions, the children often referred to previous information that they remembered from our winter topics of hibernation, adaptation and migration. It was great to see them making these connections!

The topic of cycles also led us into a very exciting study of caterpillars, butterflies and the topic of metamorphosis. We were lucky to have our own classroom Painted Lady caterpillars, which we were able to watch as they went through their life cycle stages. Each child had their own caterpillar journal, in which they were able to record observations and any changes that happened to the caterpillars. Once each caterpillar turned into a chrysalis, it was hard to be patient and wait for new signs of change, but about 9 days later we had 5 butterflies! Once the

butterflies emerged, the children were able to get a close up look at the beautiful insect. They were able to see firsthand the butterflies using their long, straw-like tongues to suck nectar from the flowers we put into their cage. Soon after they hatched, the children decided the butterflies would be much happier living outside, so we let them go free outside in the garden. Occasionally we see a painted lady butterfly fluttering around the playground and we believe it is one of our butterfly friends coming back to say hello to us!

As the school year comes to an end, the topic of kindergarten will begin to come up. As a gentle reminder, please try to keep conversations with your child about plans for next year as low key as possible. There are still a few weeks of school left, as well as a whole summer full of activities before the kindergarten year begins. Too much talk about events in the distance future may cause some confusion and possibly unnecessary worries.

I want to extend a huge thank you to Ryann who has been an amazing partner to work with. We have both truly enjoyed our time with your children this year. We also would like to thank each of you for your support and generosity this school year. All of your help with fieldtrips, fundraisers, parent library and helping with activities in the classroom has been a great help to us. Thank you all so much!

We will be celebrating the end of the school year with a class picnic at Horses Shoe Lake on Wednesday May 30th. We will meet at the park at 1:30 and stay until 3:30. All families are asked to please meet us at the park. We will be having a snack, setting up obstacle courses and participating in a spring art activity. Please check for a signup sheet for volunteers to bring snacks. We are looking forward to celebrating with all of you!