

Field Notes

The Weekly Newsletter of The Community School of Mount Desert Island
Tuesday, March 5, 2019 - Volume #22

Director's Note...

Each week, as the days progress, students in all classes begin to wonder what the class "outing" will be. Generally, we announce it on Wednesdays, and the excitement mounts, as we plan our learning adventures, and the gear we will need on Thursday. Some even plan ahead what they will bring for lunch, as it is important to be well nourished in the field. Though teachers go into outing with goals and a plan, it is in the field where the best emergent learning takes place. By emergent learning in this context, I mean: "Learning that occurs when children are engaged in collaborative activity about something that deeply interests them and/or something they discover ... the teacher's role is to collaborate with the children in their exploration so their knowledge can scaffold (build upon) their understanding." (Lewin-Benham, NAEYC Beyond the Journal, March 2006).

This was the case last week, when we came upon a scene that deeply captivated the children. I put my closing plan aside, and fully engaged in listening to them, asking them leading questions and prompting them to build on past knowledge, observe, and collaborate with one another. We had stumbled upon a sapling that had been partly chewed by a beaver. Fresh wood chips rested on top of the snow, and blood spots stained the snow surrounding the tree. The crusty snow revealed no tracks. No bones, guts, feathers were to be spotted. There was no blood trail to or from the tree. The class was taken by this "mystery" and their emergent



Mysterious beaver activity

Reminders:

- Student led conferences: Thursday, 3/14- please sign up on the clip board in the entryway
- No school Friday, 3/15: Professional Day

Thank You To

The Hardy Family, McCune/Tewhey Family and Soares Family for their recent book donations!

Natural History Mystery:

What is the term for sharp, irregular grooves or ridges formed on snow by wind erosion, particularly in the polar regions, and on frozen lakes around here? Hint: It is a Russian word.

work took off so naturally. The conversations and conjectures, continued as we walked back to the cars for pick-up, on the drive back to the schoolhouse, and was the topic of conversation for the rest of the week among the children. Some told me they had engaged siblings, and parents in the details of the mystery, and all requested that I send the digital picture that we too of the scene home to all families, so the investigation could continue over the weekend (which I did).

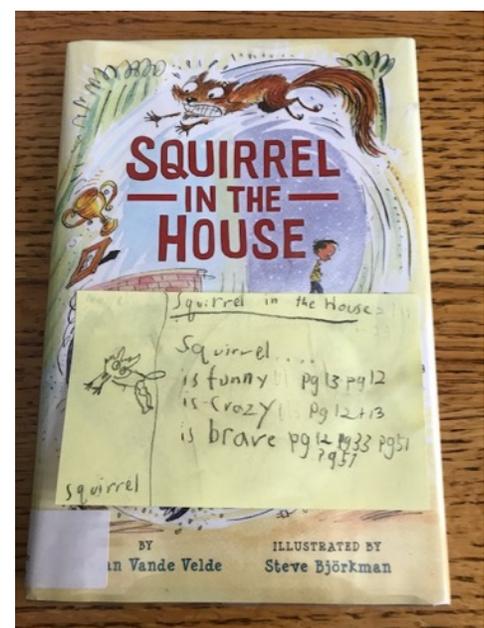
This emergent learning experience was one of the more mysterious, but experiences like this one are not uncommon at TCS. Even with the best made plans, we never know what we are going to find. It is important to us as good educators to be open to these experiences. It is the magic, beauty and complexity of the natural world that lends itself so well to emergent learning-- a kind of learning that empowers, draws connections, encourages creative

problem solving, invites collaboration, and inspires a sense of wonder that lives in the children forever. For more tales of emergent learning, ask a TCS student!

Warmly,
Jasmine

From The Woodland Class...

In the Woodland Language Workshop we “do something” when we are done reading. We reflect on what we have read and respond in some way. We talk or write about the time and place of the setting, the characters’ feelings or a problem in the story. We make predictions and notice interesting vocabulary. Lately, we have added quick book reviews and ratings that we write on post-it notes and add to the cover of the book. It’s a great way to let others know what might be good books to select from our class library.



Woodland Language Workshop

The Woodland Class will be snowshoeing on COA's Cox property, off of Norway Drive, this Thursday. Please bring any kid-sized snowshoes that you have at home! Thanks.

All best,
Miss Marie



Woodland Class along Cromwell Brook and Sliding at recess on the highlands of the Jesup Path

From The Intertidal Class...

Dear families,

Welcome back from a glorious snow day--I hope you all found some time to be cozy and to play!

On the Thursday and Friday before February vacation, the Intertidals embarked on their annual overnight! We ventured up north to North Woods Ways, staying in a cabin and exploring the fields and woods of a property not far from Moosehead Lake. We braved the cold temperatures and explored the deep snow--snowshoeing, star gazing, and building deeper connections as a class.

Here are some of our favorite memories from the trip:

-When we were playing outside in the snow and were sledding. And when we dug a hole under the porch and climbed under it.

-When we snowshoed out to the lake and star gazed with the telescope. We saw so many stars including Mars and Sirius, the brightest star in the sky.

-When we were star gazing and me, Mr. Nick and Ms. Aura were re-leveling the telescope.

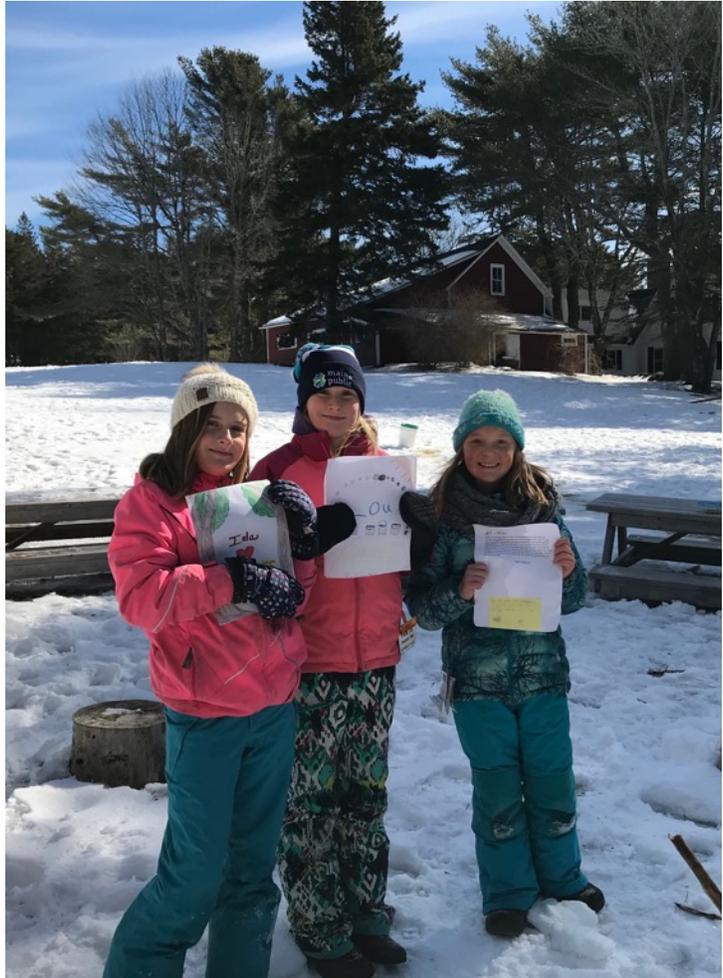
-When we used the ice chisel to make a fishing hole in the ice. The ice was 27 inches thick!

-When we were driving home and me and Aliyah were cracking up!

Many memories were made during our adventure! We were grateful to share this experience as a class.

We will be school based for outing this week, working with Blake on developing our play! It is really coming along.

With warmth,
Bethany and Aura



Intertidal oral tradition presentations around the fire

From The Alpine Class...

Dear Families,

The Alpines have begun a study of non-fiction reading & informational writing in their recent ELA work. We kicked off this unit with a non-fiction focused trip to the Northeast Harbor Library, where the students excitedly checked out stacks of fascinating books. We are so lucky to have this resource in our community! The Alpines have been reading books and news articles while practicing their note-taking and synthesis skills. We are appreciating the hard work of journalists and studying how information is presented to us in the media.

As this unit continues, the Alpines will be writing informational essays and continuing to gain new knowledge through their study of diverse non-fiction. If you have a favorite informational text that you enjoy (magazine, newspaper, podcast, memoir, etc.), please feel free to share it with your student!

We will continue working with our amazing play director, Blake Whyte, during outing time on Thursday.

Thank you for your support!

Warmly,
Amy



Woodland students enjoying lunch in the valley between Dorr and Champlain

News and Upcoming Events

Thursday, March 14, 9am-5pm (1/2 hr. each)

The children will be actively reflecting on their work and preparing for conferences in the weeks ahead. Conferences are a time for the children to share their growth and progress with you, and reflect on themselves as a member of our community. Each conference will be a 1/2 hour and the sign up sheet is posted in the entry way. If you come into the school to sign up in the morning at drop-off time, please park your car in the parking lot, to maintain our drop-off traffic flow. We encourage both parents to attend the conference, if possible, as your child(ren) are proud to share their work with you!



THE COMMUNITY SCHOOL OF MOUNT DESERT ISLAND

CURIOUS ABOUT THE COMMUNITY SCHOOL?

Drop in at our Ellsworth info session to learn about our Place-based model and 2019 Admissions.



TUESDAY MARCH 19TH 2019 | 4 - 7 PM
J&B ATLANTIC CO
142 MAIN STREET, ELLSWORTH
contact info@thecommunityschool.me for more information

TCS Info, Session in Ellsworth!

Curious about The Community School?

Tuesday, March 19, 4-7pm at J&B Atlantic Co, Main St. Ellsworth

Help us spread the word and invite folks to drop in at our Ellsworth info session to learn about our Place-based model and 2019 Admissions. Flyer attached.

Spring Mindfulness Workshop: Are You Busy? With Josh Ehrlich

Saturday, March 30, 3-5pm at The Community School

In this workshop you will:

- Reflect and re-set priorities
- Make time and space to live
- Find room for fun and creativity
- Dig out from endless errands
- Give and get support

Come discuss new skills, share ideas and have fun. Take away a

pragmatic action plan to be more effective. Josh Ehrlich is a senior advisor and coach who inspires innovation and change. He has worked with hundreds of professionals and leaders in multinational companies. He is a leading authority on succeeding in demanding environments and an expert in mindful leadership. Mindfulness is the discipline of being

focused, present and inspiring in an era of rapid change and information overload. Josh received a BA with distinction from Yale and a PhD from NYU in Clinical Psychology. He is the author of MindShifting: Focus for Performance. **\$20 suggested donation to the TCS mindfulness program fund. Space is limited! Pre- register with Jasmine Smith at info@thecommunityschool.me or send check with "3/30 Mindfulness Workshop" in the memo to The Community School, PO Box 825, Bar Harbor, Maine 04609.**

ARE YOU BUSY?
SIMPLIFY AND FOCUS WITH JOSH EHRlich

Reflect & re-set priorities | Make time & space to live | Find room for fun & creativity | Dig out from endless errands | Give & get support

SATURDAY, MARCH 30TH | 3-5 PM
THE COMMUNITY SCHOOL OF MDI

Suggested Donation of \$20 towards TCS Mindfulness Program Fund

Pre-register at info@thecommunityschool.me

Josh Ehrlich is a senior advisor & coach who inspires innovation & change. He has worked with hundreds of professionals & leaders in multinational companies, is a leading authority on succeeding in demanding environments, & is an expert in mindful leadership. Josh received a BA with distinction from Yale & a PhD from NYU in Clinical Psychology. He is the author of "MindShifting: Focus for Performance."

Cultivating a Sense of Self, Place, and Community.



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