



# CROSSINGS

## Newsletter

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### DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

March and the promise of spring! We will be kicking off the month by participating in the Village of Manhattan's Irish Fest Parade on Saturday, March 5. Your family is welcome to walk the parade route with us – just let us know and we will get you all the details. If you choose to watch the parade instead, be sure to say hi when we pass by!



Our in-house re-registration process for summer of 2022 and the 2022-23 school year is complete. Any spots that were not registered will be offered to those families on our waitlists. We are truly hoping to have a record year in enrollment! Keeping our classrooms full helps our program in so many ways! Mainly, full classrooms benefit our teachers by giving us the funds to provide better salary packages and retention programs for our wonderful teaching team. This leads to hiring top notch teachers and reducing turnover rates, which means higher quality care for your children. I have been focusing on improving our staffing for the past six months and will continue to make this my focus for 2022.

Plans are well underway to celebrate our 20th anniversary on Friday, June 3! We will be hosting an open house with fun kid's activities, food, games, giveaways and more! Be sure to put us on your calendar for Friday, June 3 from 4:30p-7:30p! Pass the word along as well – we want the entire Manhattan community to help us celebrate, and we'd love to see some of our past students and teachers too!

*Donna*  
Miss Donna



### March

### Birthdays

3rd	Anthony V	18th	James H
4th	Easton S	19th	Miss Bailey
6th	Elliot S	20th	Skylar R
10th	Lachlan D	27th	Norah H
16th	Miss Donna K.	29th	Dakota M
18th	Dakota G		

HAPPY BIRTHDAY



## YELLOW DUCKS

February was a colorful month in the Yellow Ducks room as we focused on learning all sorts of colors! To kick off the start of this color-filled month, the Ducks focused their art projects on red for Valentine's Day! The Yellow Ducks created Love Bugs for our hallway bulletin board using red paint with assistance from the teachers.

After the children explored all things red, we continued learning about the other colors of the rainbow. The Yellow Ducks teachers introduced new colors each week through books, toys and messy play. Messy play consisted of exploring colors through paint, jello or food coloring dyed foods such as cooked pasta and cool whip. The use of sensory materials creates hands-on, self-directed and self-centered play, as well as encourages discovery and development.

In addition to learning the colors of the rainbow, the Yellow Ducks accomplished many milestones developing their gross motor skills. By developing these skills, the Ducks grow and gain independence and support them to explore the world. The Younger Ducks practiced their gross motor skills through tummy time. The next group of Ducks (3-7 months) also practiced tummy time but were more focused on acquiring skills to roll over from back to front and front to back. In addition to rolling over, this group of Ducks also practiced the skill of sitting up. Lastly, the older Ducks (7+ months) worked on improving and experimenting different ways of moving. The teachers encouraged scooting, crawling and taking steps by placing toys just out of reach of the children.

To finish off the month, the Yellow Ducks teachers started to focus the art activities and classroom decorations around our spring unit. We are looking forward to some warmer weather soon and the arrival of spring!

**Miss Karen, Miss Amy, and Miss Gina**

## PURPLE PARROTS

The month of February was all about love and lovebugs for the Purple Parrots classroom. This month flew by, but it was still filled with many activities for our toddlers. The Purple Parrots created tons of artworks such as ladybugs, paper plate lovebugs, marble painted hearts, dotter hearts, and much more!

Introducing art to our toddlers is vital as it introduces them to many learning opportunities such as sensory play, color recognition, fine motor skills, and enhancing vocabulary. The Purple Parrots had fun getting all messy in our red cool whip sensory play! What better way to enjoy sensory play than be able to eat it as well! During this activity, the toddlers explored with one another as they used their five senses to play in the cool whip. With the month of February comes Valentine's Day! The Purple Parrots had a blast at their party! The Purple Parrots enjoyed a sweet treat of cookies and yogurt, marble painted hearts, made slime, and danced to some music! Our Valentine's Day party was nothing short of sweet!



## Purple Parrots continued...

The Purple Parrots were excited to take home treats brought by their classmates! Thank You to all our parents who donated to make this sweet party happen for our toddlers!

As the month of March comes along, we are hoping for warmer weather to enjoy some more outside time! Please make sure you have a coat, hat, and gloves here for your child to stay warm outside! March will be full of GREEN and rainbows for the Purple Parrots!

**Ms. Kathy, Ms. Emily S.,  
and Ms. Emily K.**



## RED ROBINS

The Red Robins had an exciting February! This month the Robins focused on building their friendships, the importance of taking turns, and how to appropriately communicate our feelings to our classmates! These skills were encouraged by exploring a variety of “stations” set up in the classroom with one another. The stations included gross motor steppingstones, Play-Doh, an area to experience bubbles, the art table, and exploring materials in the sensory bin. The Robins were encouraged to explore their areas for a designated amount of time, and then they would switch to a new station. Stations not only promote patience and taking turns, but it also allows the children to engage in an activity they might not have known they would find interesting! Stations also assist the children in completing one task before moving onto another. These stations promoted gross and fine motor skills, hand eye coordination, and the children were very curious about what different stations would be offered throughout the month.



The Robins also celebrated love and friendship this month with our Valentine’s Day party! They enjoyed Valentine’s themed freeze dancing, decorating cards with stickers, and enjoyed sharing a special treat! We have also enjoyed going outside whenever the weather allows. We cannot wait for warmer weather to play outside and all things spring! Sincerely,

**Ms. Kelly, Ms. Jessica,  
Ms. Rhi and Ms. Grace**

## GREEN FROGS

For the month of February, the Green Frogs wrapped up their study of the Arctic by becoming scientists for the day! The Frogs cognitive skills were put into practice as they conducted a final experiment where they used table salt, rock salt, and a spray bottle filled with warm water to free the animals that were trapped inside a big ice block. The Green Frogs were excited to identify what kind of animals came out from inside the block as the ice melted away! With the ice melting away, the Frogs moved into the fun festivities that Valentine's Day brings!

In preparation for our big holiday party, the Green Frogs created Name LoveBugs, to help identify the letters of their name and to fine tune their fine-motor skills, as they wrote their letters. We continued practicing our letter recognition as we found letter hearts around the room and fed them to our Valentine's Monster. The Green Frogs celebrated Valentine's Day by having a bubble party! The teachers placed bubble wrap on the floor for us to dance and pop. The Green Frogs stomped their feet and waved their arms to pop the bubbles on the floor and in the air.



As we have been stuck indoors, the Green Frogs spent the following week exercising their muscles. We discussed the muscles in our legs and arms, and how they help us move. We pushed our legs to the limit, as we perfectly executed squats, lunges, and leg lifts. To exercise our arm muscles, we each grabbed dumbbells (wooden blocks) for our arm curls and chest pulls. We are hopeful to be able to go outside to continue exercising our muscles.

Our remodel is moving forward, we appreciate your patience as we update the building. We are excited to see the finished product.

**Ms. Fran, Ms. Valeria and Ms. Kelsey**

## ORANGE OWLS

This month, we revolved our studies around learning about the various oceans in the world and everything in between. The Owls had a blast creating and learning in depth facts about several ocean animals which included jellyfish, turtles, numerous fish species, sharks, whales, and so many more. We even discussed unique animals such as anglerfish, brain coral, and blobfish! The Owls dove deep into learning the ocean's names, what is special about each ocean, and what animals live in each ocean. We spent several days reading educational books, creating games, and learning new facts.

Towards the end of the month, we wrapped up ocean, talked about everything that we learned or found interesting, and finalized our study. The last week of February, we really focused in on exercising our fine motor muscles (small muscles in the hands). The Owls learned all about fine motor muscles on how we can work on strengthening them. We used scissors to cut on dotted lines, learned how to hole punch, played with tough playdough, and squeezed each other's hands. Next month, we are going to start out by introducing a new subject to the classroom: Transportation! The Owls are thrilled to begin learning new things and what makes the world move!

**Ms. Bailey and Ms. Krista**



## BLUE GILLS

This month the Blue Gills children spent time learning a little about oral hygiene. We talked about foods that are healthy for our teeth and ones that cause us to have cavities and other mouth issues. We worked on our counting skills by counting the 32 teeth on our resin model, sixteen on top and sixteen on bottom. For art, we enjoyed using dental tools to paint with. We painted shiny teeth with toothbrushes and used dental floss to create some process art. During Circle time we read some books about becoming a dentist. After each story we read, we incorporated a discussion group of questions to promote higher level thinking and reading comprehension skills. Our favorite books were predictable rhyming books. The children were able to figure out and help read the stories because of the way the text was written. We also had a great time in the beginning of the month as we made predictions on if

Puxitawney Phil would see his shadow or not. We were all rooting for an early spring, but this year Phil disappointed us! You wouldn't be able to tell with the warmer weather we are experiencing, but that is what transpired. Valentine's Day brought out the love and friendship in the Gills room more than usual. We made a circle of friends, traced hearts, passed out Valentine's to our friends, and took time to tell a friend what makes them special at circle time. The best part of the whole month was our trips to Tinley Bowl. Being able to work our large muscles after being stuck inside all winter was a treat! We had a lot of fun working on our balance and upper torso muscles as we rolled our way to strikes, splits, and spares! As our month came to an end, we started a new study of Zoo Animals. The children will learn all about the different animal species and their native habitats. We are so very excited about all we are learning right now!

Ms. Rhonda and Ms. Wendy

# BLUE DOLPHINS

February might be the shortest months of the year, but the Blue Dolphins made the most of it while at Kid Country. To spread the love in the hallway, the children created a bulletin board with hearts that best describes themselves. Each child wrote one or a few words to describe themselves and what they love about themselves. The promotion of self-love is so important in development especially as children grow older. The teachers encouraged talk about what they love or admire about one another as well to bring the concept full circle.

The creativity did not stop there. The Blue Dolphins worked together to transform recycled materials into many objects or concepts. The children planned and prepped the art table with any materials they needed to transform an empty tissue box into a bridge or a mini basketball court and hoop. The children took it the next level of creativity when they turned the materials into bongo drums, a hot air balloon, snowman, and even a cotton candy machine. The teachers in the Blue Dolphins classroom are very impressed with how truly artistic and authentic their ideas are.

Finally, the Blue Dolphins had two days off from “big kid” school and joined KC for a full day. Ms. Rhonda kept the Dolphins busy by creating and little wooden bird houses. They first assembled the bird houses, then the children chose the paint colors to make the bird house their own. The current trend in the Blue Dolphins classroom is creativity and everyone is loving it.

Overall, it was a loving, creative, and enthusiastic month in the Blue Dolphins Room. As February ended and the Dolphins welcome the lucky month of March, the children are already planning their leprechaun traps and saving materials.

**Ms. Rhonda, Ms. Donna K., and Ms. Wendy**



5th Irish Fest Parade



7th Inservice Day  
(Kid Country is Closed)



17th St. Patrick's Day  
Dress in green!



25th Hearing & Vision Screening



28th Manhattan Spring Break Begins

