

# Sonshine News

December 2005

## From the Director:

The holidays are upon us: Christmas - New Year!  
Are you ready?

When you prepare for the Holidays, what do you focus on? Family dinner at your house? Packing up your family to go visiting? Buying gifts for your children - your spouse? someone less fortunate than you?

Holidays are exciting and fun but they can also be hair-raising and stressful. Just think about it. As adults, we know what we want out of the holidays - sometimes our expectations are met, sometimes not. Children, however, are usually along for a bumpy ride through shopping trips, changed schedules, "strangers" (Santa, relatives they've either never met or seldom see), etc. Remember: preschoolers need to talk about what's happening (especially when the "normal" daily routine will be disrupted).



When you're thinking about your plans for Christmas, think about what you remember most about Christmas as a child. Perhaps a special toy will come to mind, but mostly it will be times spent with family doing "special family things". How 'bout planning some "special family things" for your own family this year. Ride the "Polar Express" train through Sunol with friends and family. Its become a Sonshine tradition for many Sonshine families. Other ideas to get you started might include: a fire in the fireplace, a cup of hot cocoa, a favorite story, a hug, planning a gift for someone else, attending church together, visiting the local children's discovery museum, attending a local children's theater performance, picnicking at a local park, planting, walking in the rain (slickers, boots & hat) jumping in puddles,... the list could go on forever.

Take time to plan together as a family, play together as a family and be together as a family! Take time to enjoy the moment - every moment!

Christmas Blessings to you and yours!

Penna Steele, Director



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## Registration for Fall 2006

Can you believe we're already looking forward to next year's registration?

### Currently Attending Student Registration

Registration for currently enrolled Sonshine students will take place on Saturday, January 21, 2006 from 8:00 to 11. Every child must be re-enrolled for the Sep 06 - May 07 pre-school term. A Registration Application form will be placed in each parent's file in January along with a new Fee Schedule. Watch your parent files in January for more details.



There is NO GUARANTEE that your child will get a specific day or time.

Enrollment is based on a first-come, first-paid, space-available basis. Therefore, we encourage you to complete your application and bring it along with a blank check to the Saturday, January 21 Registration event.

Applications can not and will not be accepted prior to the official registration date. If you are unable to turn your application in in-person on that date, you might ask another family member, a friend or a neighbor to turn it in for you. Sonshine staff members are not allowed to turn in applications for anyone.

As always, the registration fee is non-refundable and not transferable.

Each year, classes are set up to meet as many returning student requests as possible. With three age groups (2's, 3's and pre-K/4's) and only four classrooms with limited space, we can't guarantee everyone their first choice, but we do make a great effort to accommodate as many requests as possible.

### Sibling Registration

Sibling Applications will be available in the office after Returning Student Applications are placed in your files. Sibling Applications will be processed Jan. 26, after returning student applications (watch your parent files for more details). Once we begin to process sibling applications, no further preference will be given to returning students although we will continue to accept returning student applications.

### Alumni & TLC Member Registration

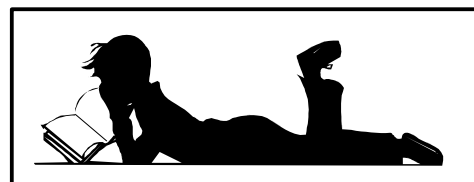
Registration for Sonshine Alumni and Trinity Lutheran Church members will take place on January 31, 2006 from 1 to 3 pm. Once we begin to process alumni and TLC members applications, no further preference will be given to returning students or siblings although we will continue to accept their applications.

### Open Registration

Open Registration for the Community will take place on February 1, 2006 from 7 - 10 am. No further preference will be given to returning students, siblings, alumni or TLC members at this point.

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Policy Reminder: Sonshine maintains a new waiting list for each preschool term and teacher/classroom assignments may change from time to time to maintain adequate, quality coverage at all times based on licensing, enrollment, revenues and budgeting constraints.



## Sonshine Fundraising Opportunities

### Escrip News & Updates

The eScrip committee reports that from Sept thru Nov, eScrip benefits to Sonshine Preschool have totaled \$1,681. Good job! Let's see if we can beat that for this upcoming year! We can always use new eScrip members to support our school.



### You have to eat....

When you, your friends, neighbors, grandparents or others sign up their Safeway Club Cards to support Sonshine we receive automatic benefits every time you shop. Its a no-brainer! Visit [www.escrip.com](http://www.escrip.com) to sign up now. The web site lists all retailers that support eScrip.

### And you have to shop for the holidays...

The easiest way to raise money for our school through eScrip is to sign up your credit and/or debit cards with eScrip. Here's how that works: Register your card(s) at [www.escrip.com](http://www.escrip.com) and list Sonshine Enrichment Center Preschool as the organization you support. Then whenever you shop with any of the hundreds of eScrip retailers nationwide and on the Internet, our preschool will receive a cash benefit. Here are some of the local and online retail supporters of the credit/debit card program: Big 5, Baja Fresh, Gene's Fine Foods, Round Table Pizza, Payless ShoeSource, eddiebauer.com, sharperimage.com and more! Get Shopping!

Happy Holidays from the eScrip committee!



## DECEMBER 2005

- 1 Tuition Due
- 5 Late fee applied at 3:30
- 14-15 Chapel
- 20-21 Christmas Celebrations
- 21 Last Day before break
- 21 First day of Winter
- 25 Happy Birthday Jesus!
- Dec 22 - Jan 6  
Sonshine Closed -  
Christmas break

## JANUARY 2006

- 1 Tuition Due
- 5 Late fee applied at 3:30
- 9 Sonshine Resumes
- 14 Parent Workday (8am-Noon)
- 16 Sonshine Closed - MLK Jr Day
- 18-19 Chapel
- 18-19 Get Acquainted Teas
- 21 Registration -  
Currently Attending
- 29 Chinese New Year
- 30 Sonshine Open - PUSD Closed
- 31 Registration -  
TLC & Sonshine Alumni

## FEBRUARY 2006

- 1 Tuition Due
- 1 Registration -  
Open to Community
- 5 Late fee applied at 3:30
- 8 Valentine Celebration (MWam)
- 10 Valentine Celebration (MWF)
- 11 Parent Workday (8am-Noon)
- 13 Sonshine Closed -  
Lincoln's Holiday
- 14 Valentine Celebration (TTh)
- 15-16 Chapel
- 20 Sonshine Closed -  
Presidents' Day

## Tea for You and Tea for Me

While the kids are in school, take a break and drop by the "get acquainted better" Tea on Wednesday, January 18 and Thursday, January 19 between 10:30am & 11:30am or 12:45pm & 1:45pm, M-thpm class parents please come on Thursday, January 19.

Stop by the Fellowship Hall for a few tasty treats and a quiet moment or two to talk and get to know each other better. Siblings are welcome if parents will supervise their own children. Come join the fun!



## From the Treasurer

Collecting, recording and depositing 240 some checks each month is a big job and takes a lot of time and effort. Many thanks to all of you who have been getting those tuition checks in on or before the first of every month.

Just a reminder: Even though school is closed for Christmas Break and January 1<sup>st</sup> is New Year's Day, tuition is still due on or before January 1. A late fee will be applied after 3:30 pm on the 5th.

Although there is no discount for doing so, you may pay tuition in advance, quarterly, or all at once to avoid late fees. One less check to write each month has been a relief for some of our parents.

Many thanks to those parents who have already completed their committee &/or workday responsibilities. Your account will be credited at the end of the preschool year.



## Health Reminder:

### Notify the office...

'Tis the season for many illnesses. If your child comes down with the following contagious diseases, please notify the office.

Chicken Pox	Croup
Hand, Foot & Mouth	Hepatitis
Pink Eye	Impetigo
Strep	Ringworm
Fifth Disease(Slap Cheek)	Lice

## Staff Lunch Time - Class Time Reminder

Thank you for observing our drop-off and pick-up times. It is important that we be prepared to help your child and his/her friends have a successful preschool experience. To do that, it is absolutely necessary for us to have time to prepare ourselves, the classroom, and the materials every day. If you arrive early, you are welcome to supervise your child on our playground, take a walk around the facility, or wait with your child in the car until class begins.

Children who have not been picked up with 5 minutes of the end of class will be escorted to the director's office so staff can take their required lunch break or close down the classroom and prepare for the next day's class.



Thank you for helping to make this a successful experience for the children who are currently enrolled in our program.

## What to Expect in January

As most of you know we try to follow the Pleasanton Unified School District calendar for the preschool year. This year we return again on Monday January 9. That means the children will have been out of preschool for over two weeks. In that short time most of our families will be traveling, hosting guests, celebrating Christmas, rushing to buy last minute gifts or hurrying to the after Christmas sales, etc..

What kind of changes can you expect in our program when we return in January? That all depends on the changes we see in the children when they return.

Most children are overwhelmed by the activity of the Christmas season and miss their usual everyday routines. They long for the time with their friends at preschool and the daily routines they are so familiar with by now. A few children back up a bit and may temporarily go through separation anxiety again; however, mostly what we see in the children in January is an amazing transition that we call "blossoming". And most of our classes "really gel" once they return from Christmas Break.

We look forward to more exciting, rewarding time and activities with your children in the New Year!

*The Sonshine Staff*



## Spiders and Christmas

Stories about spiders and Christmas are quite popular in Germany. One legend relates that on Christmas Eve, families allowed the animals to come inside to see all the beautiful decorations. Spiders, however, had to stay outside because they had a way of spinning webs everywhere and they were not welcome in the clean house.

When the spiders complained to the Christ child, Jesus felt sorry for them and late on Christmas Eve, he let all the spiders into the houses. They became so excited as they traveled all over the admiring the beautifully decorated Christmas trees, that they left trails of web. Jesus noticed the webs and changed them into beautiful threads of silver and glitter.

**GREETINGS!**



When the families woke in the morning, the trees were covered with wonderful, silvery threads. The tinsel we use today reminds us of this delightful tale.<sup>1</sup>

All people, just like spiders, need to have others discover their value and gifts. This Advent, stop and see the the goodness in each person you meet. And while you're at it, practice gently removing spiders and other insects from your house rather than killing them. Remember you are your child's model.

Check out the story "A Dozen Silk Diapers". It's a wonderful story about spiders & their special gift for the Baby Jesus.  
<sup>1</sup> Advent & Lent Activities for Children: Camels, Carols, Crosses, and Crowns; Sheila Kielly; Sheila Garaghty.

## Book Reviews

Here are a few book reviews submitted by Sonshine teachers:



### **The Very Hungry Caterpillar**

by: Eric Carle

Submitted by: Ms. Devon

The Very Hungry Caterpillar is one of my favorite books to read to children. The photos are bright and colorful which is a great way to lure the children in. While the book is hardly 20 pages long, it contains so much great information. It exposes them to the days of the week (chronological ordering), repetition (memory and participation), and counting up to ten. Then, after the Caterpillar eats all the different foods each day, he wraps up into a cocoon and turns into a butterfly. The book contains math, science, various types of food and lots of fun pages.

### **Widget**

by: Lyn Rossiter McFarland

Submitted by: Mrs. Clark

This is a favorite of mine because it's a soft, subtle little tale that makes everyone reading it happy. Widget, a stray dog, pretends he's a cat in order to get a home. The story ends with a moral for us all: "Just be yourself". (ages 4-8)

### **Lifetimes**

By Bryan Mellonie & Robert Ingpen

Submitted by: Mrs. Clark

A beautiful way to explain death to children. This book explains life and death in a sensitive, caring way. The pictures positively move you through the book. The words beautifully help children understand beginnings, endings and living in between. (ages 3-6)

P.S. Ms. Penna loves all three of these books!

## Cookie Dough Fundraiser

Have you smelled the wonderful smells coming from our ovens now that the cookie dough has arrived? There's nothing more welcoming than the smell of fresh baked cookies.



In case you want some more cookie dough, check with the office for availability. There are still a few tubs left!

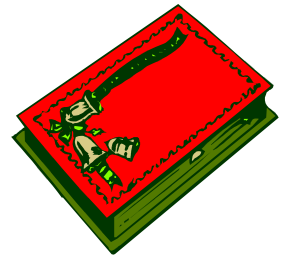
Thanks to everyone who purchased items recently. 45% of the profits goes directly to Sonshine, which raised \$3,240.

*Cookie Dough Committee*



## See's Candy Fundraiser

Wasn't it difficult deciding which beautiful gift boxes to choose? So many delicious assortments to choose from! Exactly like the ones found in See's candy stores for the same price, but a percentage of the purchase price comes directly to Sonshine. A win-win for all!



Thanks to everyone who placed orders, Sonshine raised about \$1,500 this year!

*See's Candy Committee*

## Real Learning

Have you ever thought or heard someone else say: "I'm not going to have my child in that classroom. All they do is play."

Perhaps this person doesn't really understand a developmentally-appropriate classroom or how children really learn.

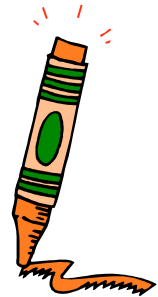
As adults, we have developed the tools to learn by reading, seeing, hearing, thinking, using past experience and collective knowledge. Children are just starting out and need time to develop those same "adult" tools.

As much as we understand parents' concern that their child be ready for "real learning", we definitely understand how children develop and how they do "real learning" every minute of every day through developmentally-appropriate activities, materials and experiences.

Real learning isn't just writing letters and numbers or reading letters and numbers. Real learning is much more than that. In fact, one of the most important skills employers are looking for in hiring new employees is the skill to work with others. Many employers say they would rather hire someone with good people skills and teach them the job than hire someone who already knows the job but can't work with people.

Before a child is capable of sitting, holding a pencil, writing letters and numbers, reading, etc., he/she must be physically, mentally, emotionally, socially and cognitively ready to take on these tasks with interest and enthusiasm.

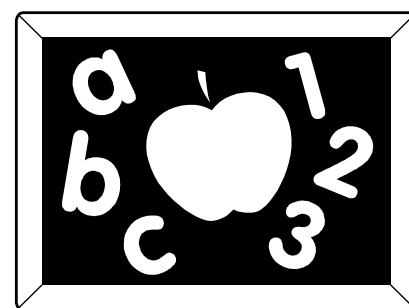
Just as we would not allow your child to drive a car without being ready, we should not expect your child to sit, hold a pencil, think abstractly, write letters and numbers, etc. until he/she has developed the muscle control to sit still for long blocks of time, to hold a pencil for more than a few minutes and has moved successfully from the concrete to the abstract stage of thinking.



The activities we provide in the classroom environment may look like child's play to adults, but please know that your child is developing in appropriate ways, the skills (social, emotional, physical, cognitive) needed to move on to their next stage of learning.

Most importantly, our goal is to help your children "learn to love to learn." Thanks for giving us the opportunity to provide your children with a great foundation on which to build all their learning for the rest of their lives.

Next time you step into a preschool classroom or even on the playground, please be sure you put on your "preschool eyes" and see what great learning is going on!



**"Lost time is never found again." Let your children enjoy their childhood. It's only one they have to prepare them for the rest of their lives.**

# Holiday Crafts and Treats for Children and Families!

## Holiday Stars

### Materials:

Popsicle sticks, glue, glitter or salt, thread or ribbon



### Instructions:

1. Paint or color popsicle sticks.
2. Glue sticks in a star shape by placing down the sticks and gluing them one-by-one as if you were drawing the lines of a five sided star. Alternately, you can make the star in the shape of an asterisk.
3. Decorate with glitter glue, glue and glitter or glue and salt for crystal effect.
4. Tie or glue a loop of thread for the hanger.

## Pine Cone & Glitter Ornaments

### Materials:

Pine cones, glue, sparkles, and gold thread. (Good places to get pinecones are Amador Community Park (Black and Santa Rita) and Muirwood Park)

### Instructions:

1. Spread glue all over the pinecone. Kids can use a paintbrush to get the glue all over the pinecone.
2. Gently sprinkle sparkles on the pinecone. Make sure there is a piece of paper underneath to catch the extra!
3. For younger children, put the sparkles in a small paper bag. Have them drop the gluey pinecones into the bag and shake.
4. Another way to make these pinecone ornaments is to have the kids use glitter glue to decorate the pinecones in one step.
5. Attach a loop of thread to hang the finished pinecone.

## Frozen Yogurt Snowmen

### Ingredients & Supplies:

Frozen Vanilla Yogurt  
Flaked Coconut  
Raisins, grapes, and/or blueberries  
Small candies like gumdrops or M&M's  
Cake decorating sprinkles  
Chocolate Chips  
Plates (heavy paper or plastic will work well)



### Directions:

A couple hours ahead of time prepare two round scoops of vanilla frozen yogurt for each person, one slightly smaller than the other. Place them on a tray in the freezer to harden. To make the snowmen, give each person a plate. Have kids roll their "snowballs" in the coconut. Create snowmen by putting the smaller scoop on top of the bigger one and decorate with additional items. Keep in freezer until ready to eat!



## Advertising Submission

Do you have a business you'd like to let our Sunshine families know about? To place your business card-sized ad in our next newsletter, please put it in an envelope with \$10 (checks payable to Sunshine). Place it in the brass mail slot.



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