



# Maraylya Munchkins

November/December 08

## From Leahn's Desk . . .

The lights are up and the Christmas decorations are everywhere.....Christmas is nearly here. For the team here at MELC it is an exciting time with preparations well underway for the Maraylya Christmas Festival and the Graduation Ceremony for all of our Dragonflies who are heading off to Big School.

The Maraylya Christmas Festival is on **Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> December** and is run in conjunction with Maraylya Public School as both a celebration of Christmas and a fundraiser for the School. Our children all participate in a special performance of their rehearsed Christmas songs at the Festival and it is always a gorgeous display! Our children's performances will start at 5pm on the day. The Festival itself is a wonderful family afternoon and evening with carols sung by the school children, rides and Christmas stalls. We are all looking forward to a fabulous day and hope that all the families and friends of MELC can come and join in the festivities!

Information about performance times will be given as soon as the schedule is finalised.

The Dragonflies Graduation Ceremony will be held in the evening on **Friday 12<sup>th</sup> December**. The children will give a short performance for their families and then receive their graduation certificates followed by a light supper. A professional photographer will be available on the night to capture this significant milestone for the graduating children.

A special thank you to Karen Hugo for organising the visit from Glenorie Rural Fire Brigade. It was a fabulous day full of information and loads of fun for the kids. We all appreciate the importance of fire safety and were so glad to give the children the opportunity to see real fire engines, have a turn with fire hoses and see the smoke tent.

### *Staff News*

Our wonderful teacher Vanessa has been offered a Director's position at another Centre and she has decided to take up the opportunity. This means that she will be moving on from MELC so we would like to wish her well in her new role and thank her for her contribution to Maraylya Early Learning Centre.

That's all for now from me, but please take a moment to read the news from our rooms to see what your wonderful children have been up to!

From everyone here at MELC best wishes for the festive season and have a safe, happy holiday.

Best wishes,

**Leahn**

## News From the Rooms

### Bumble Bees (0 – 2)

Happy Birthday to Chloe and Austyn who turned 2 recently and will be moving up to the Caterpillars, and a special welcome to Ayeza who is a new Bumble Bee!

The children are getting stronger day by day and enjoying lots of strengthening and balancing activities. They are getting very confident on the balance beams and always love climbing on and over the softfall equipment. The new bikes are a big hit with enough for everyone to ride which certainly saves confusion and disagreements....

Bubble play is another popular activity and the children remain fascinated with the form and feel of the bubbles - this game is always accompanied by lots of giggles and excitement.

As our babies are getting bigger, quite a few are now sleeping on big beds instead of cots. They do think they are quite special on the big beds as they love to copy the older children and are in such a hurry to grow up.

The children are absolutely fascinated with musical instruments and it seems as though we have some very talented musicians amongst them. They delight in banging, rattling, shaking and battering all different types of instruments, from drums to symbols. They are also enjoying the Christmas songs and music although the favourite at the moment is "Open Shut Them" which involves hand actions that they like to copy.

*Claire and Lorraine*

### Caterpillars (2 – 3)

The Caterpillars' holiday program went really well and the children enjoyed cooking and making iced biscuits, as well as the animal day and face painting. Grandparents Day was also a great day for the children and their families so thank you to all those that joined us.

We have been talking about water from the rain and we have washed our dolls and been singing some water songs. We also planted some seeds and the children love to water the plants with spray bottles. The children have been discovering different textures, rough, smooth, sticky and soft and we made a new caterpillar for our room using our feet and painting green circles.

Everyone is particularly interested in hair dressing at the moment and using the dress up blanket and toy tools as their utensils. Of course the staff have all been thrilled with the new hair dos the children have given them .....so funny!

Our Caterpillar children have also been enjoying sharing experiences with the Butterflies as part of the MELC Transition Program. By participating in activities in that room the Caterpillars will feel much more confident about their move up into the Butterflies next year. Each visit they become more interested and involved which is a wonderful thing for them.

The children have also shown an interest in Halloween this year, with lots of talking about witches and wizards. Painting things orange (like pumpkins) and making capes and hats to dress up in was very cute!

We are also learning our Christmas songs getting ready for our performance at the Maraylya Christmas Festival and are very excited about getting up on stage. Let's hope there isn't too much stage fright on the day!

*Lindsay and Jenny*

### **Butterflies (3 – 4)**

All the children enjoyed the special holiday program, colour days, cooking and gardening. Pyjama Day was a lot of fun and we enjoyed some water play which encouraged lots of conversation. The jumping castle was a big hit with lots of giggles and fun, and it was great to have something different to spark some hilarious antics...

We have continued to work on our counting from 1 to 10 both forwards and backwards. The children's recognition skills have really improved with most of them being able to identify numbers. They enjoy playing the postman game which includes rote counting in a fun way. We have also introduced the time concept with the clock and numbers and the sequencing of days. With the introduction of patterning and language concepts including positional order the children are improving all the time!

Please check when your child's News Day falls as they really love the opportunity to talk especially when they have had a little time to think about a topic. We do try to encourage topics such as photos, events or artwork as opposed to toys. We find that this encourages more expression which in turn helps their confidence and speech in a group situation.

We have all been practicing very hard and with great enthusiasm for our performance at the Christmas Festival. The children are really looking forward to the day with lots of chatter going on about it...

*Vanessa and Alex*

### **Dragonflies (4 – 5)**

The holiday program was great fun with the children enjoying sports active and bike days, craft, science and dress-up days... we even had a jumping castle! It was a great change for the children and they really enjoy the variety during the school holidays.

Grandparent's Day at the Centre was delightful. All the children welcomed the opportunity to share their pre-school life with loved ones and I'm sure all of those who were lucky enough to be there that day had a thoroughly enjoyable afternoon.

The children have been busy engaging in discussions about the sequence of stories and patterns. Our literacy program is ensuring all the children are equipped with basic skills for testing in the first 5 weeks of school. We have also had a big focus on maths games, exploring the concepts of addition, subtraction, number and dice pattern recognition. Our visits to Maraylya Public School have been a terrific platform to show how well we have developed our mathematical skills.

The lunch box days are being enjoyed by all the children, learning how to unwrap sandwiches and open poppers and plastic bags are all handy skills for lunch time at big school.

We have been learning about road safety, engaging in much discussion, brainstorming activities and role playing various scenarios. We have also been given silkworms and have enjoyed discussing their life cycle and observing the process of silk being made. Children have been very active outdoors and extending on gross motor skills through a range of sport activities, such as tennis, T-ball and cricket.

Of course we are busily organising and practicing for our graduation concert and really enjoying learning our new songs. We have lots of conversations about the concert as well as the Maraylya Christmas Festival with all the children very excited about everything that's happening this festive season!

*Angela*