

## Outdoor Discoveries

News from the Outdoor Classroom  
College Park Preschool  
December 2014

Last month in the Outdoor Classroom, we discovered new opportunities in the Nature Space. Thank you to all the families who brought leaves to school in November! The leaves were placed in the Nature Space with some of the hay bales and rakes. The children worked together raking the leaves, and then they took turns jumping from the hay bales into the piles they created! This was great fun, yes, but there was a lot of learning going on, too! Learning how to handle a rake, climbing the hills in the Nature Space, and leaping and jumping into the leaves are all skills that aid gross motor development.



In November, we also said good-bye to the honeybees that had set up a hive in an irrigation box near the fence. We had the bees removed by a live removal company, and they are happily relocated to an avocado grove in Fallbrook. It was fascinating to watch the bee keeper use smoke to calm the bees so he could be sure to remove all of the hive and especially the queen (pictured). We still have some of the honeycomb left, and are working on some very special ways to extend the experience and learning about bees.

With the bees gone, the children discovered fabric ribbons in a basket near the fence. They started weaving the fabric into the fence near the music wall, creating a beautiful tapestry of different colors. They wanted to figure out how to get the fabric into higher parts of the fence. Recognizing the environment around them, the children worked together to move some of the large logs closer to the fence. Standing on the logs allowed them to be "taller" and reach the areas they could not previously.



Watching this problem solving and discovery is truly the highlight of my day. When we set out opportunities for learning, it is the children who decide the direction of an activity. Sometimes, it goes the way we expect or plan for it to go. More often, the children take it and turn it into something more than we ever thought it could be.

I wish you and your families a very Merry Christmas, and a blessed 2015!

*~Mrs. Greaves*