

March 23<sup>rd</sup> – 26<sup>th</sup> 2009

## Spring is here!

As your student learned last week, Friday, March 20<sup>th</sup> was the first day of Spring 2009! In celebration of the change in season we have two class planting projects underway.

The students are excited about the real “Banana Farm” we have begun to grow! We are attempting to grow our own banana plant from seed. The “Farm” includes everything we need; banana seeds, mineral rich soil, yellow rocks, a monkey, and a greenhouse. As we observe the various steps and process of developing our banana plant the students will learn little known facts such as;

- The banana is actually not a tree, but the worlds largest herb
- Banana flowers have an unpleasant smell and are usually pollinated by bats
- They can thrive outside in the spring and summer, and inside in the winter
- There are over 300 species of bananas worldwide
- There are many historic references to bananas – they are mentioned in Hindu, Chinese, Greek and Roman texts

The second planting project is our Tropical Palm Oasis. Our oasis includes an assortment of lush palms including the Date Palm, Cabbage Palm, and the Pony-tail Palm. We will also use seashells, natural sand, and blue gravel to complete the Palm habitat.

As we grow our palm oasis students will learn new vocabulary like waterhole, oasis, desert, watertable, and more. They will learn facts about oases such as;

- Oases have many benefits such as providing water for people living in desert regions
- They also allow food plants like palms, figs, olives and apricots to be grown
- Most Oases are located in Egypt, Africa & California
- The five most important oases in the world, Farafirah, Bahriyah, Dakhilah, kharijah & Siwah are located in the Libyan Dessert.

As our plant habitats grow we will continue to observe and nurture them as needed.

### IMPORTANT REMINDER

*As noted on our 2008-09 School Calendar, this Thursday and Friday, March 26<sup>th</sup> & 27<sup>th</sup> we will be closed for Spring break!*

