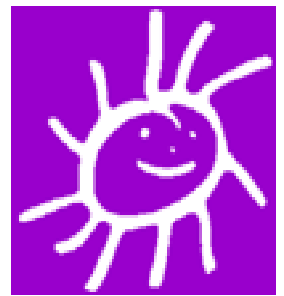


The Children's Center at Caltech



December 2007

From Susan's Desk

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Upcoming Activities

Center Closed
December 24th through
January 1st

Raccoon Parent Work Day
Saturday, January 12th

We had some unfortunate sad news this Fall. Milly the Lead teacher from the Beaver classroom had to leave us after 10 years of remarkable service. She will be attending to a family matter and we wish her and her family well. In addition to being a terrific preschool teacher, Milly has a Masters degree in elementary education. Her knowledge of child development, professionalism, and sense of humor are just a few of the qualities that will be missed.



Ann and I have been working with the Beaver teachers, and although I'm having a lot of fun, I'm reminded what hard work it is to be in the classroom. A hiring committee has been assembled of Kate Stevenson (Beaver Mom), Solange Ramiras (Beaver Mom), Veronica Gama (Raccoon Lead Teacher), Liz, and me. We have received quite a few resumes and will begin the interviews the week of December 17th. It is our hope to have the new Lead Teacher in place in January.

Jason, an associate teacher in the Koala classroom has decided it is time to go back to school and finish his BA degree. Jason was a favorite for many children and a pleasure to work with. Jason will also be sorely missed. Jason can never be replaced but we do have a new Koala teach Manisha Kodituwakku. We were very fortunate that Manisha was a Cal State LA student who was already a student worker in

the Koalas, so she is familiar with the children.

Although this year has ended with some sadness it was also filled with excitement. The HHMI grant made it possible to complete the CCC Science Laboratory. Shortly after the lab opened it received the Sparks awards that recognizes innovative small architectural projects.

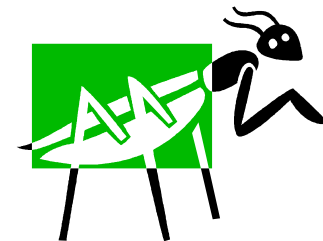
Additionally, through a generous anonymous donation we were able to open a new position of Science Curriculum Coordinator. Ann Chandler was chosen to fill the position and she has been a wonderful addition to our team.

We are looking forward to another year here at the CCC and I wish all of you peace and happiness in 2008

Fondly - Susan

From the Science Lab

As we approach the end of the fall season in the science lab, we are also tracking the end of the life cycle of the praying mantids we keep in a terrarium. This is the time of year when the female mantids lay an egg case.



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In the spring hundreds of young mantids will emerge from each. We already have two egg cases in our mantid habitat. When the children see pictures of the egg case in our mantid books, they excitedly remind me that they saw the same thing themselves. The books we have are so much more interesting to them because they have had personal experience observing and handling the mantids.

We had another exciting event when our grasshopper shed its exoskeleton as some of the children observed. We were amazed to see that the grasshopper that emerged had changed from green to gray.

The children have shown so much interest in entomology that I recommend



a trip to the Insect Zoo at the Natural History Museum. Several of our staff went there on a field trip in August and met with an entomologist who maintains the habitats. Her help allowed us to start our own insect zoo.

Another favorite activity in our lab is experimenting with color. We have been mixing food colors in bowls and also dropping them onto paper towels and watching them combine as the towels absorb the water. This would be easy to do at home, too. Just dilute the food color about one or two drops to 50 milliliters of water and use an eye dropper or disposable pipette to add it to clear water or paper towels.



Bunny Hopping

Greetings Bunny Families!

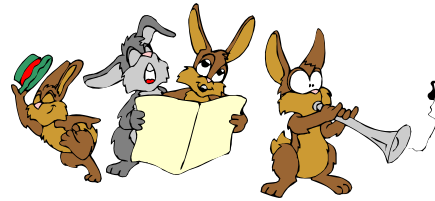
The month of September was a busy month for the Bunny class with all of the transitions that took place. Eight new children transitioned into the Bunny room. We would like to extend a warm welcome to all of our new Bunny families. We would like to welcome **Maayan, Molly E., Catalina, Gili, Ludovico, Molly A., Zoe, and Ava** along with their families to the Bunny Room. We are excited to be working with the new parents and their children. We have enjoyed watching all of these new children grow and learn in the Bunny Room.



The Bunnies would also like to welcome **Itamar, and Joanna**, our two newest children and their families to the Bunny Room. We look forward to watching these two new children grow and learn in the Bunny Room along with working with their families.

Things finally started to settle down in the Bunny Room

during the month of October once the children became familiar with their new environment and with their caregivers. The children established bonds with their primary caregivers and also established bonds with their secondary caregivers. Once the children established trust with their teachers and with their environment then they started to freely explore and try many new things.



The Bunnies would like to say a sad farewell to our former Bunny babies and their families:

William, Phoebe, Daria, and Seth who transitioned over to the Dolphin Room. Also, a sad farewell to **Amy** and her family, who were only with us for a short time before transitioning over to the Dolphin Room. We miss them dearly, but we know that they are growing and learning many new things in their new environment. We take comfort in knowing that they are only a room away.

We also would like to say farewell to **Sarah and Evan** along with their families who left the center.

In addition to the many transitions that took place during the month of September in the Bunny Room, there were also some changes in staffing that took place. We said farewell to two Bunny teachers and welcomed one new teacher to the room.

The Bunnies said a sad farewell to beloved Bunny teacher

Petruta Achiriloaie in September. Petruta had been at the center for 6 years before she had to leave

unexpectedly to take care of her grandson. Petruta and her accordion are missed dearly by all of the Bunny teachers and children. She was a gifted teacher, musician, and artist.

The Bunnies also said farewell to **Susanna Chan** who left the center to go back to school full-time. We wish her the best of luck in her educational endeavors.



The Bunnies would like to extend a warm welcome to **Nancy Jinon**. Nancy is the newest addition to the Bunny teaching staff.

Welcome also to **Monica Wood** to the Bunny Room. Monica is the former substitute for the center but is now working in the Bunny Room.

The Bunnies would like to say thank you and welcome to our new room parent **Ruth Cassuto, Gili's** mom.

We would also like to say thank you and welcome to our new web parent **Melissa Saenz, Paloma's** mom.

The Bunnies were looking at the sense of sound during the month of October. We looked at the sound of music and the sound of animals. The children were really interested in the different sounds of music and musical instruments that we explored with. They had fun exploring with shakers, bells, tambourines, drums, and other musical instruments. The children had fun shaking shakers and bells, tapping tambourines, beating drums etc. They listened to different types of music such as Classical, Native American, Reggae, and of course beloved children's songs like *Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star*, and *The Itsy Bisty Spider*. The children enjoyed the exploration of the animal puppets and finger



puppets. The children also enjoyed singing the many different songs about animals; along with reading books such as *Brown Bear, Brown Bear What Do You See* and *Polar Bear, Polar Bear What Do You Hear?*

The Bunnies were exploring with the sense of touch during the month of November. We looked at the different textures of things.

With the arrival of fall we looked at various nature items along with the weather. The children enjoyed going on nature walks around campus. The children painted with leaves and also did ice painting. The older children had a lot of fun jumping in piles of leaves. Our young Bunnies crawled through the pile of leaves. The children really enjoyed looking at the rain; along with touching it on that one rainy day that we had.

Bunny Reminders:

1. Rest-Sitting Opportunities: Tuesdays from 1:30-2:30, Thursdays from 1:30-2:30 and the third Wednesday of the month from 1:15-3:00. These are great opportunities to earn parent hours. If you are not able to rest-sit, but are looking for other ways to earn parent hours, then just ask a Bunny teacher for other parent hour opportunities.
2. Please label all of your child's things. This is to prevent things from getting lost or mixed up.
3. Please remember to sign in and out daily, and to fill out a daily sheet everyday.

4. Don't forget to take home your child's blanket on Friday's to wash it if they have one.

Dolphin Splash

The curriculum development of Movement (Energy) with a focus on Transportation has been one of excitement for the children. The emergent curriculum with the movement of trucks, cars, and a host of people within the environment has made this particular unit of study one that can continue on and on. Within the past week, the emergent topic of bugs has sparked the children's interest. The children are continuing to development in language as well as small and large motor skills.



With cooler weather upon us, please bring extra clothes in your child's cubby.

Erica Aly has now joined the Dolphin teaching team. We also welcome the following children that have transitioned to the Dolphins: **Seth** and **Daria**.

Thanks to all of you for scheduling parent conferences. It is truly a pleasure to have an educational part in your child's life.

Special thanks to **Joelle (Estelle's Mom)** who has taken on the responsibility of being the Dolphin room parent. Play dates have been set up, so check your e-mail for Joelle's message.

Dolphin Reminders:

1. Label all items of your child's clothing.
2. Check your parent file daily
3. Parent hours can be earned for rest sitting on Tuesdays, Thursdays, and specified Wednesdays.
4. Please sign in and out each day.
5. Children books are available for check out

Penguin Parade



The Penguins would like to welcome our newest Penguin, **Ian Chan**, to our classroom. During the month of November I have enjoyed our theme: Patterns of Change. Even

though it was difficult to see Fall in the air because some days felt like the month of June or July, I have enjoyed watching the leaves gracefully fall from the trees in our yard. The Penguins have enjoyed walks on campus to collect leaves and flower petals. We cut two pumpkins open to see what was inside of them. We did a survey to ask the Penguins what they thought was inside of a pumpkin...and this is what they said:

Christiana - cookies

Samuel - a digger

Erin - apple

Ian - I don't know

Ken Ken - it's big

Elaine - pumpkin

Zohar - money

Ryan - an airplane

Amy - cookies

Lilah - cookies

Dante Ortiz - snake

Euan - an egg

Hanning - a snake

Laila - a zebra

Asaf - ice

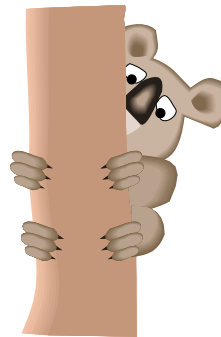
Dante - money

Check out other surveys that we have done in our classroom. In addition, the newest song we have learned is *Gray Squirrel*.

Koala Korner

Hello Koala Families!

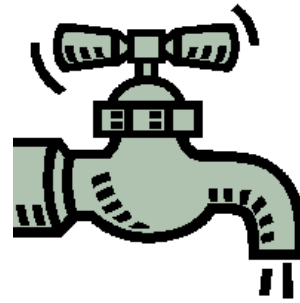
This month the Koalas investigated change with a focus on water. We watched water change into different shapes as we experimented with water freezing and melting. The Koalas enjoyed the sensory experiences while holding cold ice cubes. In one experiment, the children placed colored ice cubes in a Ziploc bag and taped it to the window. In a couple hours they saw the ice cube transform back to liquid. In other projects the children predicted in which location the ice cubes would melt the fastest.



The Koalas also enjoyed using the new sand table in the science lab. They spent many mornings mixing together water and sand. This provided them with another sensory experience while they

learned that water causes the sand to stick together.

We have also asked the Koalas, "Where does water come from?" Some of the children's responses included, "from the sink," "the pond, and "the hose." We decided to take a walk on campus and look for traces of water. We



saw droplets of water on the grass, a maintenance worker watering the roses with a hose, the sprinklers watering plants, water in the ponds, and many fascinating water fountains.

We will continue our study of water next month. The children are having lots of fun watching and experiencing the recent rainfall. (Note: if your children have rain boots they will be able to enjoy splashing in puddles, or bring an extra pair of shoes.) The rain has created new points for discussion! Our new favorite song goes like this: Rain, Rain Go Away, come again another day, Little (insert KoalaName) wants to play, Rain, rain go away.

This past month we also said good-bye to one of our favorite teachers, **Jason**. He will be leaving and return to school full-time. We will miss him and wish him the best. We welcome two new teachers, **Manisha** and **Nancy**, to the Koala room. We are excited to have them join our team.

Koala Reminders:

1. Check regularly for any soiled clothing in your child's cubby.
2. Keep cubbies stocked for colder weather.
3. Please label clothing, especially socks!



Raccoon Roundup

Hello Everyone!

Here we are closing the year in the Raccoons. We have had so many journeys together. We would like to thank all the wonderful families that have supported the class throughout the year. To mention a few thanks:



Thank you to **Charles** (Gregory's dad) for organizing the family adventures on the weekends.

Thank you to the parents that join us on our bike day. It is always nice to see parents and grandparents enjoying the morning with us.

Thank you to **Portia** (Samantha's mom) for sharing books and music with the children during circle time.

During these past few months the Raccoons have focused on the central concept of change.



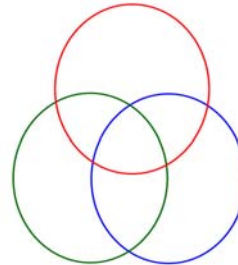
We have been documenting the progressed of our **blue lupines** we planted behind the

Beaver room. The children have noticed that they were growing slower than our recent sunflowers. However they are finally starting to bloom and that's exciting!

We have also related change to ourselves. We conducted surveys that had the children think back when they were babies to them now. Our friends also drew self-portraits by looking into a mirror. This

activity lends itself to discussions about how we are alike and different. In addition to looking at our features we also measured our height with blocks and our feet with Unifex cubes. We will later measure our height again and see how much we have grown and changed. Our friends also created

a Venn Diagram comparing themselves to a praying mantid.



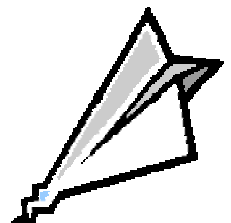
The Raccoons have started working with mosaic. Our plans are to take the process very slowly. So far we have experienced working with individual plastic pieces to create and recreate designs. We have also gone on walks to take of mosaic examples on campus. The latest is that the children worked collaborative with another friend to create a design with pebbles on clay. It has been a learning project not just for the children but also for the teachers.

Have a safe vacation and see you next year!

children from the time she spent with them as Koalas and from their work together in the science lab. We also have a new assistant teacher, **Christine Westfall**. She is currently working on her Master's degree in Education at Pepperdine University and has already established great rapport with the children.

We are delving into a new science curriculum area: scale and structure. As we build with many different materials, we will discover how to create balance and stability. If you are building with your children at home, challenge them to build higher while still keeping their structures stable, or suggest they try to build enclosed spaces.

We have added an additional dramatic play area to our classroom on the front porch. A very high percentage of the children in the classroom spend much of their time engaged in dramatic play and we wanted to give them a little more space. We have also provided rolling frames for them to drape with fabric to create small enclosed spaces.



Several of the children are showing great interest in airplanes and know several different types of aircraft by name. We like to make paper airplanes for test flights in the play yard. If you know of a particularly good design for paper airplanes, please share them with us.



Beaver Tales

This month has brought changes to the Beaver classroom. Although we miss **Millie**, we are also excited about our new team. Our Science Curriculum Coordinator, **Ann Chandler** is helping out until we get a new lead teacher. She is familiar to most of the Beaver

Cold Meds?

This story ran in the press in October, but it is an important story for all parents of children under age 5. It has been edited here for space. - Editors

Pediatricians to FDA: No cold meds to children under 6

WASHINGTON (AP) -- Cold and cough medicines recently pulled from sale for infants and toddlers shouldn't be given to children as old as 5, either, pediatricians told government health advisers. Some doctors say giving cold medicine to children is ineffective, and potentially dangerous. They argue that the medicines not only don't work in children up to age 6 but that they can be dangerous as well. "Are there safe and effective therapies for the common cold?" asked panelist Dr. Ruth Parker, an Emory University School of Medicine professor. "Love. Liquids. That's what I recommend," said petitioner Dr. Joshua Sharfstein, Baltimore's health commissioner and a pediatrician.

While the medicines have been marketed for use in children for decades, it has long been acknowledged there is negligible or no data from studies in the very young to show they are safe and work. Worse, some studies suggest the medicines are no better than dummy pills in treating cold and cough symptoms in young children. "When a treatment is ineffective, its risks -- if not zero -- always will exceed its benefits," said Dr. Michael Shannon, a Children's Hospital Boston pediatrician and Harvard Med. School professor.

The drugs, including some Dimetapp, Peditacare, Robitussin and Triaminic products -- have never been tested in children, which a previous FDA panel noted as long ago as 1972. Drug makers instead have used extrapolated data from studies in adults to come up with dosing recommendations based on a child's age or size.

Parking Please

A few parents have commented to Susan and other staff about issues with parking around the CCC. Now that it is often dark when children are picked, we especially need to be careful.

- Please be courteous of other families.
- Please don't park too close to other cars.
- Please don't drive too quickly on the street.
- And please teach your children by example, for example, please use the crosswalks.

Happy Holidayze

It's that time of the year again. Already. Goodness. Where DOES the time go? It's the season of lights, shopping, school performances, and runny noses. Tonight we noticed that our neighbor that keeps the icicle lights on the house all year long doesn't actually plug them in this time of year. However, last night, after the girls climbed into their pajamas, we took them on a quick tour of the Upper Hasting Ranch lights where people do turn their lights on this time of year. We managed to find Sophie's request, i.e., "the house with the snow" (actually, just a wonderful bubble

blower masquerading as a snow machine). As we pulled up, Anneliese suddenly yelled from her seat, "CANDY CANES!" Please tell me how she can remember that the nice man at this house hands out candy canes? We still want to go by the Balian House and along Christmas Tree Lane in Altadena. We'll get there, and, regardless of your family's faith tradition we delightfully recommend you do as well (descriptions follow). The lights are ever so pretty. – *The Editors*

Christmas Tree Lane, Altadena

Three blocks of trees decorated with colored lights. From downtown Pasadena, drive north on Lake Avenue, turn left on Woodbury and right on Santa Rosa to Altadena Drive.

The Balian House, Altadena

This display includes 10,000 colored lights and numerous holiday depictions all over the lawns of the 3 1/2 acre property. To reach the Balian house from Christmas Tree Lane, turn right on Altadena Drive and travel to Allen Avenue. Make a right turn on Allen and a left on Mendocino.

Upper Hastings Ranch (UHR), Pasadena

Each UHR block competes to create displays with a common theme. UHR is bordered by Michillinda Ave. to the east, Sierra Madre Blvd. to the south and Riveria Drive to the west. From the 210, take Michillinda north to the lights.

St. Albans Road, San Marino

From Upper Hastings Ranch, take Michillinda south to Huntington drive and continue to St. Albans Road, turn right.

