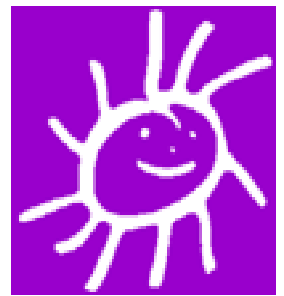


The Children's Center at Caltech



Summer 2007

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Upcoming Activities

Parent Education
August 13th - 12-1 p.m.
Beavers – Financial Planning and How to Avoid Pitfalls

Parent Education
August 15th – 1:30-3 p.m.
Avery Library
Special Needs

Board Meeting
Aug. 20th - 7:00 p.m.
Room 239, Moore Lab
All parents welcome!

Center Closed
Monday, September 3rd
Labor Day

293 South Chester Avenue
Pasadena, California 91106
626.395.6860
626.793.7308 fax
www.ccc.caltech.edu

From Susan's Desk

Many of you already know about transitions at CCC, and this article is an oldie but a goodie. For some it will serve as a reminder; and for new families, I hope it proves useful. – Susan

As summer continues it's time for transitions. Children will be moving into the next room and new families will be joining the Center. Transitions can be stressful for parents and children alike. We realize the delicate nature of these moves and the importance of good communication. Lead teachers have a pivotal role in this communication. They meet once a week with Liz and me to discuss, among other things, transitions. From the Lead teacher meeting the information is carried to the team meetings. Leads are responsible for informing parents of the up-coming moves and Liz notifies families from our wait list of openings. During these meetings, we look at the schedules of openings, fit children from the waiting list into new spots and choose the children who will be moving from younger to older classrooms. There are many things that factor into this decision. We begin by considering the child's maturity level; age and developmental readiness; emotional/social relationships; vacation schedules each of which are factors that weigh into the order and timing of each move.

As a parent you may wonder, "Why is our family vacation a factor?" It can be hard for a child to move to a new room and a

week later be gone for a month and then return to the new room. To minimize the number of changes that a child must navigate through the teacher may choose to postpone the move until your family returns.

Sometimes we are able to move friends together. A close friend can offer support in a new environment. Other times a teacher may opt to separate friends for a short duration in order to give one or both some independence. The shy of two friends may need the opportunity to establish their own personal bonds with new teachers before their friend joins the room.

Availability in the next room can pose a problem. Your child might be ready to move but there is simply no spot available at that time. It is important to remember that the waiting period for the next space is generally a short one so please be patient.

Because we have six classrooms and we only serve children ranging in age from six months to six years old it is impossible for each child to spend a year in every room. Some children do what we refer to as a "hop skip" and others might skip a room completely. What we mean by "hop skip" is that some children will spend only the summer months in the room before moving to the classroom where they will spend the following school year. These children are carefully selected by weighing in the previous mentioned factors



Some ways that you can help are:

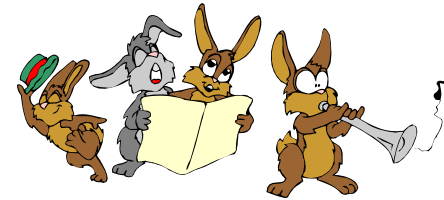
- Make an appointment to talk to your child's Lead teacher.
- Talk to your child about the transition and remember that child will look to you for cues on how to react to this change so keep it positive.
- Acknowledge your child's feelings. "I can see that you are a little scared but I am sure that your new teachers will help you."
- Take a little extra time in the morning to say good-bye.



to identify several of these and observe them both alive and dead under the microscope. We are encouraging the children to note the differences between specimens and the various microhabitats where they are found. We will be attempting to establish an artificial insect

habitat in a terrarium. Several of the teachers will be making a field trip to the Insect Zoo at the Natural History Museum to become better entomologists. This would also be a great trip to make with your family. Make sure to stop by the butterfly garden, too.

and You Know it Clap Your Hands." They have been enjoying all of the water play that we have been doing with the warm weather here. They have enjoyed splashing in the turtle tubs filled with water alongside their friends, painting the fence with water and brushes, and playing



with water inside the sensory table. One of

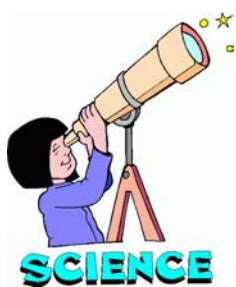
our Bunny Children (William) who seems to really love water likes to take a bucket of water and pour it on his head and body. Then after doing this he will sign and say the words "more, more, more" indicating that he wants more water to play with. The children have also been doing painting with brushes and their hands. We have explored with the multicultural paints since we are talking about our bodies and body parts.

If you have any questions, comments or concerns please don't hesitate to call Susan.

- Susan

From the Science Lab

Although the new science lab has only been open a little over two months, we can't imagine how we ever got along without it! It is



quite a thrill to be with the children as they discover the physical and biological world for themselves. We have especially

enjoyed all the contributions from parents who have brought in everything from dead bats (preserved in a jar, of course) to musical instruments made of PVC pipe. We always enjoy these surprises and it helps keep our lab interesting.

The children are especially excited about collecting insects in the yard. We have been able

Bunny Hopping

Greetings Bunny Families!



We have been exploring our bodies in the Bunnies by focusing on our body parts. This has been a topic of

interest to some of our older Bunnies who are starting to recognize their body parts; particularly the parts of the face. Our younger Bunnies are also curious about some of the body parts of their fellow classmates. One body part of interest for many of the children is the hair of other children. We have been focusing specifically on the parts of the face, e.g., eyes, ears, nose, mouth, teeth, tongue, hair, and head. We have also been focusing on our hands and feet. The children have enjoyed singing songs such as "Head, Shoulders, Knees, and Toes," "Show Me Your Jumping," and "If You're Happy

The Bunnies would like to say a sad farewell to **Estelle Brower**, **Kailo Owahdi**, and **Abigail Pejsa** who transitioned over to the Dolphin Room. We miss them, but we know that they are only a room away. We know that they are growing and learning many new things in their new environment.

The Bunnies would also like to extend a warm welcome to our two new Bunnies **Charlotte McDonald** and **Seth Healey** and their families. Welcome!

We would like to say thank you to **Joelle Zavzavadjian** (Estelle's mom) who was the Bunny room parent. Thank you for the great job you did as the room parent. We would also like to say thank you to **Amy Zahler**



(**Evan's** mom) who has agreed to be the new Bunny

Bunny Reminders:

1. Rest-Sitting Opportunities: 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.
5. Please remember to bring extra changes of clothing for your children. With the warm weather here we are doing lots of water play.
6. Also with the warm weather here, please don't forget to apply sunscreen if your child needs it. We ask you to please put the first application of sunscreen on, then we can reapply it if your child needs it.

Dolphin Splash

With the central concentration of "Change/Growth", the children are exploring how toes and fingers grip, grasp, hold, crunch, and smash. The children are showing great interest in this area of planned possibilities. Some of the various activities have included painting with



Hands – Toes - Fingers, and Open Shut Them.

We want to welcome our new friends **Estelle, Kailo, and Abigail**, all of whom transitioned from the Bunny classroom. We say "see you later" to **Alex, Sean, Zachary, and Euan**, who transitioned to the Penguin classroom and **Miles** who was temporarily at the center.

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

Thanks again for your continued support of the CCC!

Penguin Parade



This month has been one of Change and Growth. Our present focus is *Getting to Know You*. This curriculum includes topics such as *Me, My Body, I'm Not a Baby, and I'm Responsible*. Since we have new penguins coming and older

Penguins transitioning to the Koalas, now is a good time to familiarize your child with the Koala Room and the pre-schoolyard. So far **Martino, Leo, Alison, and Hanu** have transitioned out of the room. In addition, **Erez** and **Itamar** moved to Israel in July. We will miss them. **Hannah** and **Ella** are transitioning in and our newest Penguins also include **Dante, Eleni, Asaf, Zachary, Sean, and Euan**.

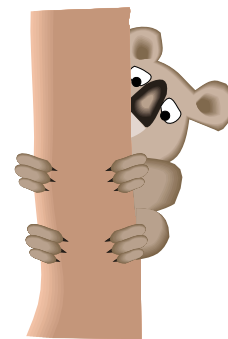
We are trying to get to know our new Penguins and their families. With that said, please bring in an updated family photo as family photos are comforting to the children. For the house area, please also bring in an empty cereal box of your child's favorite cereal.

Since the Penguins enjoy listening and singing we will learn the words to Slippery Fish. You will receive a copy of the words in your parent mailbox.

Koala Korner

Hello Koala Families!

The Koalas have been welcoming and saying "see you later" to many friends during this annual transition time. We would like to extend a warm welcome to our new Koalas: **Alison, Hanu, Martino, Ella, and Hannah**. The teachers are looking forward to an exciting school year with you! We said good-bye to **Anneliese, Cassidy, Chloe, Gregory, and Jack** who moved to the Raccoons. We will see you in the yard!



The Koalas continue to investigate living vs. non-living things. To get a better look at our environment, we went to explore our Caltech campus. We noted many living things along the way. The Koalas said there were flowers, bees, roly pollies, and turtles living on campus. Some children also went outside and captured pictures of living things. They pictured the tree (**Jason**), grass (**Spencer**), House (**Max**), strawberry plant (**Gregory**), log (**Douglas**), flower (**Alison**), and Teacher Jason (**Wei-Wei**). We invite you to come and see our bulletin boards to hear more responses about why these things are living or not.



We also had an exciting cooking project where the Koalas made homemade pesto sauce. The Koalas began by picking basil leaves from our garden. They proceeded by rinsing the leaves with water. We gathered the rest of our ingredients olive oil, parmesan cheese, and garlic cloves. There were two methods of mixing. The more traditional way was using the pestle and mortar to grind the leaves and garlic. After a while we tossed everything into the food processor. Then voila! We had our fresh pesto sauce! Sylvia then served it over warm pasta for snack. The children had so much fun with this project. It enriched their senses, broadened vocabulary, helped with measuring ingredients, and the best part is that they were involved in the

entire process. Ask a Koala if they will pass on the recipe!

Next month we look forward to having lots of fun with sponges!

Koala Reminders:

1. Sign in and out daily
2. Apply 8hr. sunscreen in morning. Teachers will reapply if necessary.
3. Keep extra clothes in cubby. Please label everything!

We hope you are all enjoying your summer! That's all for now!

Raccoon Roundup

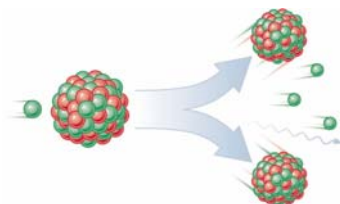
We had a few more transitions in July. We said good-bye to **Sean** who has moved to the Beavers.

We also said farewell to both **Aden Lee**, who has left the CCC, **Mina Mandic**, who will to move to Minnesota, and **Jane**, who has moved to Taiwan. We give a warm welcome to our newest Raccoons **Cassidy**, **Jack**, **Anneliese**, **Chloe**, **Sophia**, and their families.

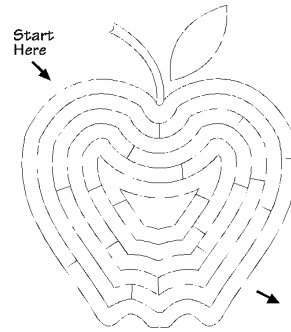


Congratulations to **Dacia Diaz** who will tie the knot on August 11. We wish the best for the happy couple! We thank those who attended Dacia's wedding shower. It was a grand time for all.

July was a very exciting month for the Raccoons. We are working on the science central concept of Energy. Our friends have been investigating movement and light. The rain gutters have been a success in the room. The children have created



mazes, problem solved, and worked cooperatively. The

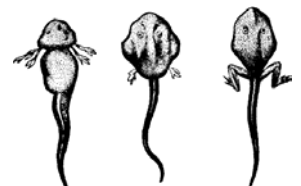


children have experimented with different objects with the gutters from small blocks to marbles. We looked to bubbles on our light projector.

We traced as best we could on paper how the bubbles moved. The bubbles created spectacle colors on the paper. They seemed like they were dancing.

The Raccoons have also enjoyed transporting water using different devices. The children used plastic tubes and turkey basters to create movement. They worked together and experimented with different ideas. They discussed with each other on the best way to transport the water up the tube and back down to the water table. It was quite the scene. They learned that force was a big part of their investigation. Force was also used when they tried to blow different objects with a straw. Why did some objects move and others didn't? Why did some move a certain way? The Raccoons answered these and other questions.

Our tadpoles have grown their legs but they still have their tail. It has been an amazing process to document. We have been using our journals to record the wonderful cycle. We can't wait to have full fledged frogs!



Reminder: Please no toys at school. It has become a problem in the past. Of course it is okay if its part of mystery box. Also children may bring a small soft toy (e.g., teddy bear) for nap time. They may also bring a book, pictures from a vacation, or a nature item to share.

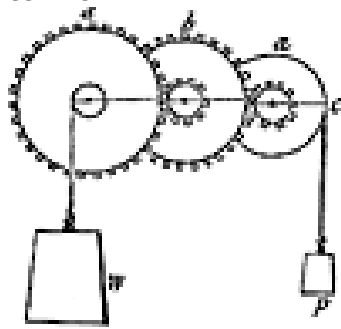
Beaver Tales



The science concept of **Scale and Structure** centered on our continued focus on *Simple Machines*, where we extended our explorations of

gears, wheels, levers, work/loads, and tools. We did cooking projects while we examined the simple machines commonly used in our lives, such as cooking machines like blenders, juice makers, whisks, etc.

We also went to Caltech campus to do several observations and drawings. On our trips, we



noted the chain pulleys, the big cranes and tractors, the machines behind the industrial alleys, etc. When we returned back from our trips, the Beavers drew these structures in *miniature scale*. Likewise, we built numerous simple machines into their representational scales, using a variety of materials and manipulatives.

We brainstormed the simple machines rampant around us, such as the miniscule pulleys in our window blinds, which allow us to roll the blinds up and down, and the wooden levers

that were mechanical models which we drew and also tested using blocks, ramps, and planks.

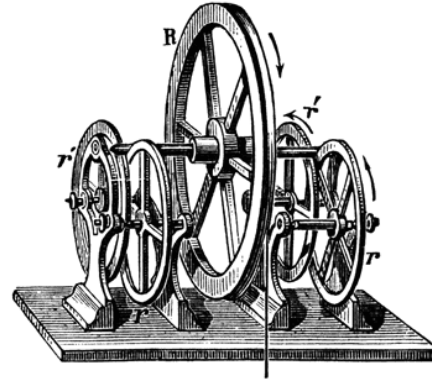
We built pulleys and loads using ropes, chains, and gears, while scientifically testing out the difference between one- vs. three-wheel pulley systems. A majority of the Beavers predicted that three-wheel pulleys lifted the load at a faster rate and later tested their hypotheses.

When analyzing this rationale, children will commonly predict this because they are “concrete” learners; that is, there is a tendency for young children to predict that “more” means greater strength (hence, three-wheels would lift an “x” amount of equal load at a faster rate than a one-wheel pulley with the same weight load! Thus children focus on what is “more” or “bigger” in terms of concrete reasoning). This is the *beauty* of children’s cognitive thinking, because *developmental* theorists

and educators would argue that young children often reason in terms of a *concrete* rationale in how they view the world. It is only when they enter the realm of early school age years (e.g., 7 yrs. plus) that they may truly grasp or rationalize in terms of abstractions.

Challenging and scaffolding children’s cognition and inquiry level also means exploring novel investigations while keeping them focused on their present understandings. Herein, we even explored the engines of a car!

Looking under the hood of a car, some of the Beavers noted the little pulleys and belt systems, as well as the lever systems of lifting the hood. The Beavers enjoyed pressing the lever so that the hood would lift up, and



later we drew the engine parts on paper. In addition, we also explored the parts of small-scale machines, by opening, examining, and dissecting their mechanical parts. For example, we opened up watches, alarm

clocks, technological gadgets, etc. and found that many of the basic functions of a simple machine were visible in these small machines as well.

We also enjoyed discussing, reading, and drawing about the mechanical and functional tools that are used to create these machines, such as using the hammers, screwdrivers, nuts and bolts, pliers, and measuring tape that reminded some of us the pulley system whereby the measuring tape coiled around the wheel.

Hence, transference of meaningful learning is once again noted.

THANKS! We would like to thank all the Beaver families for a wonderful year, for the support, feedback, and participation of our curriculum and daily routines, and the cherished conversations in the mornings and pick-up times with us, the teachers. We would like to wish every Beaver a fun and wonderful transition, as they all enter the fun *world of kindergarten*.

Finally, **we thank all of you** for your beautiful dedications, cards, letters, and generosity in appreciating us teachers as you bid us all "farewell." As teachers, we are deeply humbled and touched by your kind words, gestures, and deeds.

Lastly, **thank you** to **Nimisha** and **Hsiuchen (Arun's)** and **Ryan's** parents) for serving as our Room Parents! Wow, you did us proud! And Beavers: Come back and visit us!!!

~Love, from the Beaver Staff~

Caltech Women's Club

For many years now the Caltech Women's Club has been promoting friendships and the sharing of mutual interests. In pursuit of this goal the Club has started a variety of activities that provide support for Caltech families. Here are a couple of these programs. You can find additional information about these and other activities at cwclub.caltech.edu.

Caltech/JPL Babysitting Coop

For over fifty years local families have used the Caltech/JPL Babysitting Coop as a valuable resource for parental sanity. The Coop is comprised of about a dozen Caltech/JPL families who earn and spend "hours" instead of dollars when they baby sit for each other.

To request a sitter, members send out an email reaching out to numerous potential babysitters and advising them of their need for a sitter, the sit's date and time, and whether

they're flexible regarding the sit's location. For late evening sits the sitter usually comes to the children's house so the children can be put to bed at their usual bedtime. Daytime sits are often more like a play date with the sitter's children usually present and the location often including a park or the sitter's house.

Every month a different family takes over the bookkeeping, keeps track of the sit hours, and sends out a report so members will know their balance, which can be anywhere from minus 20 hours on up! Long gone are the days of recording sits and sending out monthly handwritten postcards. Email is now the major means of communication.

Some families join the coop just for 2 to 3 years while their children are little and they are here for a post-doc, while others find themselves on an extended stay in Pasadena and usually remain in the coop until their children are close to 12 years old (and no longer in need of sitters). Coop families are an international group with members from the US and around the world. A potluck is being planned to get current and prospective coop families together. For practical reasons, coop members should live with a 5-mile radius of Caltech. If you have any questions or are interested in joining please contact Coop Coordinator: Helen Angove, 626-793-7386 or htangove@yahoo.com

Baby Furniture and Household Equipment Loan Pool

The Baby Furniture Household Equipment Loan Pool is a useful local resource allowing families affiliated with Caltech and JPL (including CCC families) the chance to borrow cribs, portacribs,

strollers, high chairs, baby swings and other useful items for small children, as well as pots and pans, plates, glasses, irons, coffee pots and other household items. A nominal donation is requested for some items (e.g., cribs \$20, electrical items, \$3). However, toys, maternity clothes and children's clothes are free. The funds raised are spent purchasing new items for the Furniture Pool. Donations of new and gently used baby and household items are also greatly appreciated. All donations should be in good working condition and of immediate use to incoming students/families. The Furniture Pool has limited storage space and cannot store items larger than a crib. The Furniture Pool is staffed by volunteers (mostly young moms) from the Caltech Women's Club.

Baby Furniture and Household Equipment Loan Pool
234 S. Catalina Avenue (behind the house at 230)
Thursdays 10am to 1pm
626-586-9773 or
furnpool@caltech.edu

Caltech Women's Club Fall Family Picnic

Get ready for our Fall Family Potluck on Sunday, September 30, 2007! Enjoy a fun afternoon with other Caltech/JPL families at Tournament Park from 4-7pm.

There will be entertainment and arts and crafts for the kids as well as culinary treats from around the world for all of us to sample.

Plates, cups, utensils and drinks will be provided. Just bring yourself, your family and your favorite potluck dish.

