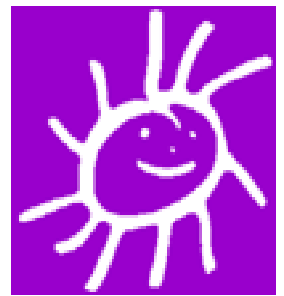


The Children's Center at Caltech



June 2008

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Upcoming Activities

Center Closed
July 3rd and 4th

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

From Susan's Desk

The Evening Under the Stars was a lovely event. The food was great, the company wonderful and the weather was perfect. As we were serenaded and browsed the auction items families were able to make connections with other parents in their child's room.

The auction was very successful and we were able to pay for the wood chips and sand purchased last fall and new sod for the preschool. We weren't quite able to put new sod in the infant/toddler yards so we decided to re-seed. It gives us a goal for next year.

During the first week of June the architectural design firm (M)Arch. was given a Design Citation Award by the Los Angeles chapter of The American Institute of America for their work in designing the CCC Outdoor Science Laboratory.

This award exemplifies the partnership between the CCC and (M)Arch. Sherry Hoffman said it well: "Together, we created something new as was stated at the dedication by the President of the Board, 'there isn't a model out there for this.' Science and innovation are part of the Caltech tradition and we are happy to have contributed to its future."

We are proud to be a part of this design award, but even more proud of the way the structure is used by the Center's children.

Fondly – Susan



From the Science Lab

Susan, Veronica Dayag, Filmeena Amjad and I and were privileged to attend the National Science Teachers Association (NSTA) meeting in Boston last month. This opportunity was made possible by a grant from the Drinker Fund, which was awarded to us this year to provide science training for our staff.

The meeting was attended by more than 11,000 teachers from pre-Kindergarten through college level. During a special session just for teachers of young children, we met other educators from around the country who are also exploring the best ways to introduce children to scientific methods and imbue them with a love for studying the physical and living world.

For me, the highlight was a trip to the Maynard Ecology Center in Cambridge. This facility, funded by Cambridge Public Schools, serves as a resource center and research site for public school children from kindergarten through high school. The children visit the center to study the pond and forest ecosystems at the site. The center uses many of the tools and teaching techniques that we do for studying our own environment here at Caltech. But, we did pick up some new ideas for sampling the environment such as using a paper frame to define a sampling area of the ground for observation and taking samples of pond water with a plankton net to examine the microscopic life.

Accredited by NAEYC's
National Academy
of Early Childhood
Programs



The four of us returned from our trip pleased to know that we are part of a small but growing group of teachers who know even young children are capable of examining and reasoning about the world around them like a scientist.

enjoyed waving bye-bye to everyone as we strolled along in our buggy. Of course, we cannot forget to mention another class favorite, visiting our friends the turtles and fish at the campus pond!

us know if you child is in attendance.

Thank you!!

Dolphin Splash



With the central concept continuing to be "movement" we are exploring insects. The children have been investigating insects and animals by using the following:

- Painting with bugs as inspiration; mixing and pouring various colors of sand art that could duplicate how insects can camouflage themselves into the environment;
- Using magnifying glasses to see the plastic insects at a closer view; making goop;
- Splashing colors of paint in various formations; and
- Daily viewing the silk worms for their spectacular arrival.

Thanks to all families that contributed to the success of the annual evening under the stars event. Whether you attended the event, donated to the dolphin classroom basket, helped in planning/ organizing/cleaning after/set up before or was a sitter for the evening, it is greatly appreciated.

As the weather begins to become warmer, please bring extra change of clothes for your child's cubby, because we will be having lots of water play. In conjunction with water play it is also suggested that each child bring a swim suit, water clothes, or swim diaper to wear during the season.



Bunny Hopping

Greetings Bunny Families!

The Bunnies have been exploring Sight and Sound. Earlier in the month, they enjoyed seeing pictures of animals and playing with small animal figures. They explored how animals make sound. The "Mooooo" of a cow seemed to be a class favorite. On rainy days we listened and looked out our "good-bye" window to see the raindrops as they fell from the sky. We also looked at Transportation and watched different cars and trucks drive by. The fire engines, with their bright lights and loud sirens, were also a Bunny favorite.

The Bunnies recently explored people using the sense of sight. People-watching is one activity we've been working on, either through our window or when we go on walks. We are talking about what we see people doing as they go by. We have seen people walking or running by, waving bye-bye, pushing strollers, and picking up and dropping off other friends.

While on our walks on campus, the bunnies found it funny to see people riding on bikes. They also



One of our favorite daily activities is singing songs using our Bunny's names in them. Songs like *Who Came To School Today*, *Bibbity, Bibbity, Bumble Bee*, *Won't You Say Your Name For Me*, and *Show Me Your Jumping*. Our older Bunnies get so excited to listen out for their name in the song, or when they can point out a fellow Bunny's name to go next.

Bunny Reminders:

- Remember to check your child's cubby to make sure there are extra clothes for the following day. We suggest bringing clothes for both warm and cold weather.
- Also, we would like to remind all parents to bring children in clothes that can be soiled. Our paints are washable but sometimes may not completely come off some fabrics. The bunnies are encouraged, but not forced, to wear smocks so some clothes may get stained.
- Rest-Sitting Opportunities: Thursdays from 1:30pm-2:30pm and the third Wednesday of the month from 1:15pm-3:00pm
- Remember to sign the Sign In/Out Sheet everyday. It is very important! In case of an emergency, this sheet will let



Penguin Parade

In May our focus was gardening. Now that our pinto beans are sprouting we will continue to focus on plants, seeds, and fruits. The Penguins are learning how to observe seeds inside of fruits and vegetables. We have observed the small pits in cherries and the large pits inside of avocados. The Penguins have also excitedly noticed that the trees in the wood chip area have lots of long roots.



It has been an amazing experience to watch our silkworms transform into cocoons. We now have one moth in our classroom to observe.

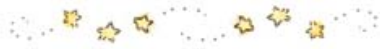
Thank you to all of our parents for your participation this month. Eiko (Ken Ken's mother) made great Sushi, and Galean (Dana's mom) brought in lima beans to share with the class, she also shared these books:

- *How a Seed Grows* by Helene J. Jordan
- *I Am A Apple* by Jean Marzollo
- *The Carrot Seed* by Ruth Krauss
- *Seeds* by Ken Robbins
- *Oh Say Can You Seed* by Bonnie Worth

Lun (Elaine's mother) taught us Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star in Chinese. We also practiced saying hello, goodbye and thank you in Chinese. Jinny (Sasha's mother) always brings in an

exciting science activity to do in the afternoons with the Penguins. It's not too late to bring in a flower, a seed or pit to share with the class.

Thank you from the Penguins

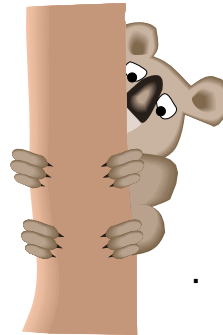


Koala Korner

Hello Koala Families!

Please welcome Cindy Lu, KenKen and their families to the Koalas.

Transitions among the CCC staff have been made and will take place in July. Please congratulate Filmeena for being chosen as the new Lead teacher in the Koalas. We will miss them in the Koalas. Jannette will be moving to the Raccoons while Manisha and Nancy will be joining the Beavers. Please wish Jannette, Manisha, and Nancy the best. Please also welcome back Kheng. She is a returning staff member who has joined the Koalas. She worked in the office for two years before going on an extended maternity leave.



Filmeena will be on vacation from June 30, 2008 to July 18, 2008.

The Koalas continue to inquire about poppies, pill bugs, and nasturtiums. We have used flashlights and magnifying glasses to inspect and explore what's happening. Some of the questions



used in this exploration include: What do you know about pill bugs? About their environment? What is their response to light?

Here are some of their responses:

- "Pill bugs are not people."
- "Pill bugs look like circles."
- "Go in the leaves and move away from the light."

As July comes around, our curriculum will shift into Form and Function. It will be based on the CCC's aesthetics.

Reminders

- Now that summer has arrived, we will be having water play on a weekly basis so please bring extra clothes and a bottle of sunscreen labeled with your child's name. Remember to apply the sunscreen on a daily basis in the morning and we will reapply in the afternoon.
- Please check your parent hours. If you would like more information or would like to work on your hours, please contact Filmeena.
- Please bring extra clothes
- Please write down in vacations that will be coming up for the summer on the calendar.
- Please remember to close the wooden gate between the Koala hallway and bathroom when you come in or out.



Raccoon Roundup

Hello Everyone!

The class would like to give a warm welcome to Nicholas and Lucas Flach's, and Olivia Maya's families into the Raccoon Room. We would also like to



welcome our new music teacher Dayita Datta.

What a wonderful time we have been having getting to know our community. The Trader Joe's trip was a success. Thank you to all the family members who helped us on our walking adventure. The children really enjoyed stepping into their freezer...brrrrrr. The Raccoons also liked taking the role of the cashier and scanning grocery items. Another fantastic experience was having a picnic at Pasadena City College and listening to Jazz. The children grove to the smooth tunes, converse and ate their lunches. It was such a relaxing time.

During the past few weeks the Raccoons have been documenting the growth the caterpillars and the tadpoles. The children have been also estimating on how long it would take for them to change. Continuing with our central concept of change we are also journaling our potatoes, chard, and beans. There are many gardening projects occurring. The children are becoming such green thumbs. They have been harvesting and clearing out the garden space and planting.

In addition to our central concept of change we have been working with ramps and pathways in the classroom. Come take a look. We first took a walk on campus and later children worked with cove molding to create their own ramps. While working with ramps children are constructing their own knowledge about physics. They are also testing out and communicating their ideas. The ramps lend

themselves to many learning opportunities.



Beaver Tales

Hello Families!

The month of May has come and gone so quickly! We have had such a productive month as we continued focus on scale and structure for our curriculum.



The spring season is a time that several insects begin to surface in our outdoor environment. Among these insects are the common colosoma

beetle, praying mantis, ants, caterpillars, butterflies, grasshoppers, and bees. The Beavers were excited to observe one of our praying mantis egg shell cases hatch. This chrysalis was from our praying mantises last fall. This began a process of documentation, questioning, and reasoning about the familiar insects. Also in the classroom was an ant farm. The children were able to understand how ants dig tunnels and how ants work together in colonies.

Thank you to the Snyder family for providing the tadpoles in the science lab. The Beavers were able to witness the transformation of tadpole to frog. This led to several surveys about the length of the tadpoles, and estimating the amount of days it would take the tadpoles to develop into a frog. The children enjoyed the process of a frog lifecycle.



We would also like to thank Ranjana Kishore for a

wonderful look at the world of bees. The children were able to get a firsthand look at an actual beehive. Also, thank you to Phoebe Tzou for her presentation about insects. The children were engaged as she showed colorful pictures and discussed the different kinds of insects.

The Beavers have started "Crazy Day" as a monthly activity. This is a time were the class comes together for one day to wear something silly! For the month of May we had "Mismatched Day". The children came to school with their clothes backwards, mismatched, and even inside out. The children had a great time sharing what he or she did for this special day.



The Beaver Class of 2007-2008 "End of the Year Celebration" was a success! The children worked hard on rehearsing the song "You are my Sunshine" and practicing the dance number of the "Tooty Ta". Thank you to all the families for the 100% participation. Also, thank you for the donations of food, decorations, and lending a hand to set up and clean up for the celebration.

The weather is beginning to warm up as summer approaches. This is the time for WATER PLAY! Please help us by providing a swimsuit, a few changes of clothing, and applying sun block on your child daily.

We have been doing several activities in the classroom. The children are proud to display their work and documentation on the boards. Please continue to look at our bulletin boards as they change bi-weekly.



Transitions

Summer marks the beginning of transitions for the CCC. Children will be moving from one room to another and new families will be enrolling into the Center. This is also the time of year that we give the teachers a chance to try a new age group or to advance to a new position. We are a year-round program so there is never a perfect time to move teachers but after much deliberation with the staff we felt that it was important to form our new teams early in the summer so that children will bond with the teachers that will be spending the next year or so with them.

The biggest changes that you will see below are that Filmeena and Virginia, both from the Raccoons, are now stepping into Lead teacher positions. Another surprise is that Max, from the Dolphins, wanted to try a new age group and will be a Senior teacher in the Penguins.

You can expect to find Liz and me in the office ready to answer any questions or concerns.

We are excited for the beginning of the new school year in the fall and wish all the families who are leaving the CCC the very best.

-Susan & Liz



From the Editors

Way too much time has passed since the last newsletter. We all know how quickly time can pass as we go along the business of life. And this last month has been one our family's most eventful yet.

My personal life memories are sort of like little vignettes. There's "Erin and Sam Meet at an Exciting Research Administrators Meeting" and "We're Pregnant!" There's "Anneliese Graduates the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit" and the ever-classic "Peacey Learns to Open the Dolphin's Gate." (Peacey is our ever-affectionate nickname for Anneliese.)

This week another vignette will be added to my brain's ever-expanding storage: "Anneliese Leaves the Caltech Childrens Center."

To live without love is to not really live.

~Moliere

Yet the main event, the vignette of our dreams, will be added to the archive next month and is also the reason that this newsletter is late. The title of that vignette will be, "Erin and Sam Get Married."

I think Sam and I always thought we'd witness our ability to legally marry in our lifetime; never did we imagine that it would happen while our children are still children.

When the California Supreme Court's decision was read back in May, we immediately began planning. First and foremost, we needed to schedule a date for the big affair. Thankfully, we managed to grab the last available summer weekend day left at our church. We've also picked our clothes for the ceremony (and after the ceremony for our daughters who want to change out of the dresses).

Each daughter was granted the wish to choose her role in our wedding. Anneliese has decided to throw flower petals as we walk down the aisle and Sophie will be the ring bearer.

We've selected the rings, the caterer, and the linens, sent the invitations, and created the wedding website. We're writing and editing our vows, have selected the music, and have worked out the timing of the event.

Last Wednesday, we went to a Los Angeles County office in East LA with our dearest friends and Erin's mother and became licensed to wed, and on Friday we met with our minister to plan the actual ceremony.

Nonetheless, all these activities are not what our marriage is really about. As Sam said at the time of the decision, this marriage will allow us to be recognized within the state as we are recognized in our neighborhood, in our church, and with our friends: as a family with all the rights, protections, and responsibilities that come with that commitment. This marriage would allow us to expect acceptance rather than anticipate discrimination of our family. Marriage would attach recognition to what we know is true, that the love that brought us together as a couple and binds us as a family matters just as all families matter.

We are fortunate to live in Southern California and to work in higher education. Yet we are even more fortunate to have the people in our lives that grace our existence. We are thankful for the professional staff that has cared for our youngest daughter. We will miss this place.

Thank you to all for all your friendship and support. Anyone want to be the next newsletter editor? Just let Susan Wood know.

-Erin & Sam

Caltech Children's Center Staff

Executive Director

Susan Wood

Assistant Director

Elizabeth Ledezma

Bunny Room

Jasmin Alvarez- Lead Teacher

Nancy Jinon

Nora Sterling

Adi Botbin-Diskin

Starla Richardson

Dolphin Room

Retha Jones- Lead Teacher

Tom Frederick

Angie Gonzalez

Denise Palma

Alexandra Alvarez

Penguin Room

Virginia Covarrubias- Lead

Sharon Amor

Dolores Gonzalez

Martha Cisneros

Max Walker

Koala Room

Filmeena Amjad- Lead Teacher

Sonia Alvarez

Raffi Asperin

Kheng Ly Hoang

Cynthia Escondon

Raccoon Room

Veronica Gama- Lead Teacher

Jannette Norwood

Hilda Llamas

Dacia Mendoza

Betsy Padilla

Beaver Room

Veronica Dayag- Lead Teacher

Sonia Alvarez

Raffi Asperin

Kheng Ly Hoang

Cynthia Escondon

Music Specialist

Dayita Datta

Science Curriculum Specialist

Ann Chandler

Housekeeping

Elena Zapata

Silvia Luna

Administrative Assistant

Char Roe

