



*Happy New Year  
to all!*

**May there be peace and  
understanding here and  
abroad....**

A Non-Profit Corporation Founded in 1973 756 Cherryvale Rd., Boulder, Colorado 80303 (303) 494-4112 December '04/January '05  
*Disclaimer: Views expressed in this newsletter are provided for informational purposes and do not necessarily reflect the views or policies of Our School.*

## **From the Chair**

For some of you the winter break was a time for visitors, for myriad celebrations, for endless excitement and enjoyment...and the never-ending special food and the stresses such events invite. For others, the winter break meant relaxation, reflection and quietly enjoying their children. For the teachers at Our School, it has been mostly a time to reflect on the program and each child and parent within it, and to discuss and plan from that retrospect. It is a time to leisurely do administrative work, have the luxury of interesting reading in solitude and...enjoy a few special dishes here and there.

As we always do about a week before the winter break, we make sure the school learning environment has a stable and relaxed atmosphere without the extra anxiety, stress or tension that is created by the inevitable flurry of winter celebrations. And now, as usual, we prepare the school learning environment in a stable and relaxed atmosphere to anticipate the inevitable excitement of children and families returning to Our School. **WELCOME BACK!!**

In January as things settle down for parents, the preparation for the Our School Fundraiser will accelerate in anticipation of the big event on March 5th. Attendance at the training meetings is required to avoid confusion or snafus on the day of the event. If you cannot possibly attend the training meetings, the Steering Committee for the Fundraiser will shift you into another committee whose training meeting you can attend.

The raffle and dinner auction tickets have already been distributed. The rules for the raffles are on the tickets, and the menu and a map to the Gate House in Lafayette are on the dinner ticket. **When you need more raffle or dinner tickets, ask Jim directly.** For questions on business solicitation or if you can do extra solicitation, call Kathy Hagen or Rachel Hansen. Don't forget – avoid selling tickets to alumni as Jennifer Fox is taking care of them.

**As you sell your dinner tickets, you can reassure prospective guests that it is a VERY, VERY**

### **ENJOYABLE EVENING PARTY.**

Complete with varied and delicious dishes, a wonderful selection of wine and beer, and non-alcoholic beverages. The items to bid on are very diverse (check the school web site for a preview) and there is surely something for everyone. As for the guests, some come in fancy clothes, some are dressed in informal attire and all are good company!

Please direct your inquiries to Yvonne, Jim and the Chairs of the Fundraiser Committee, Kathy Hagen and Rachel Hansen.

### **Thank you....**

For the breads, cookies, fruit, fresh soy beans, etc. that from time to time have come to jazz up the children's snacks, for the bottle caps, wood and corks, etc. to embellish the children's collages, and for computer paper which is a good source for drawing and water color.

**A very special thank you from Jim and Yvonne for the end of the year party and the delicious and delightful gifts, and for the bonus we received.** We deeply appreciate your recognition and understanding that to maintain the complex program quality that each child and their parents deserve requires not just dedication, but constant examination of the knowledge and research that enriches our professional understanding. Early childhood has no re-play!

### **Web**

If you have access to the internet, click on [www.ourschoolpreschool.org](http://www.ourschoolpreschool.org). It is a great resource for school information regarding open houses and forthcoming workshops, and it is constantly updated. Tell your friends and acquaintances to

check it out. The site is extensive in its presentation and is designed to offer much content about the various aspects of the children's and parents' programs.

### **Membership**

We have the pleasure to welcome three new families. Elizabeth and Randy Macht and their daughter, Ally, have joined the 2-day session. (We always add one more child in January to the 2-day session when the children have become a cohesive group, separation has become a moot issue and the new child is appropriate in terms of maturity and parents' commitment.) The 3-day session welcomes Marcy Kinsfather and her daughter, Emily, as well as, Elizabeth Brix and her son, Gideon. The 2-day and 4-day sessions are still full. The 3-day session still has several openings. (The Darragh and the Gamache-de Jode families have withdrawn from the school.)

Again, please bring prospective families to Open Houses and/or refer them to the web site. It's not too late for children to join the 3-day session. We are also now accepting new families (including new siblings) for the 2005-2006 school year.

### **Summer sessions**

Applications will be coming out in late February or early March. The summer session is three weeks in duration. The sessions are for new children, returning children and also for those children going to kindergarten next fall. More information and details will be coming soon.

### **Reminder**

Winter is upon us with its usual capricious weather. The temperature can change drastically from one hour to the

next. Young children's bodies cannot quickly make an adjustment like an adult's body. Their immune system is still weak. They can get a chill, especially in the chest, from the car to the school door! So zip their jacket. If it is snowy or wet, they need to wear boots and bring sneakers or shoes in a bag or backpack. When the weather permits to wear shoes or sneakers, bring boots in a bag or backpack anyway (the weather changes very quickly). To prevent a chill on the head, cover it. We often forget the sun is still strong in the winter here in Colorado. The faces and eyes always need protection with some visor or cap. And of course mittens! (Gloves do not keep your hands warm!) We realize most

of you take the time to do this. So this reminder is only for a few, and is intended to keep their children healthy.

We understand it is extra work to have to do this everyday. But it's like washing hands after going to the toilet, or blowing noses in a tissue (not on the elbow or sleeve!) and washing hands, or washing hands after children pick their noses and again before they eat with their fingers. These considerations are a necessary prevention to minimize illnesses and contagion in children. After a short time at school, children do it "by themselves" and require only a reminder. All of these things help children learn to develop "healthy habits" for life.

## **Fundraiser Report**

The business solicitations are continuing to roll in. However, we are currently at **only 45 percent of our goal** for the silent auction! Keep those forms coming! Things continue to roll in each day, but we need everyone to get those forms in now! Please remember to fill out the forms completely and make sure to include your name so we can attribute the donation to you! The businesses have been very generous this year. On the last pages of this newsletter we have listed many of the items that will be up for auction. Start thinking now about what you want to bid on in March! Keep an eye on the web site for new items.

Please take special note of the following dates and deadlines:

**January 28, 2005** – Turn in FAMILY DONATIONS!!! Don't forget to fill out a donor form.

**February, 2005** – Steering committee meeting month. **All meetings are required for committee members**

- 3 Food Committee Meeting
- 8 Set-Up Committee Meeting
- Clean Up Committee Meeting
- 10 Silent Auction Committee Meeting
- 11 **Raffle and event tickets and money must be turned in!**
- 15 Auctioneer Meeting
- 23 Tally/ Handout Committee Meeting
- 24 Tickets/Bookkeeping Meeting

**March 5, 2005** – 32<sup>nd</sup> Annual Fundraiser – 6pm – 10pm – Gatehouse, Lafayette

# Reflections

by Jim and Yvonne

## Is Quality Preschool Education a Necessary Value? How?

Preschool education is not just custodial and gentle care, but rather needs to be concerned with the whole development of a young child – body, mind and all the brain activities that develop worthy intrinsic attitudes and external behaviors from direct interaction with his and her school environments. Failure in this commitment and responsibility is a failure in educating the preschooler.

In Purpose & Practice in Nursery Education, Lesley Web writes:

“The most important task for those who work in the field of preschool education is to demonstrate that nursery education for all is possible and beneficial, and that good custodial care, though immediately necessary in some circumstances, must not be allowed to replace it... It is essential that professionals be recognized as a key force in education... The future of nursery education is too crucial to the whole future of education...”

“A child is seen as a person capable of developing discrimination, awareness, adequacy, initiative and insight at many levels according to age and ultimate limits set by his genetic inheritance... What external purposes such development might serve are seen as less important than the development itself, and knowledge is conceived as being of value in its own right. It is with intrinsic aims, in fact, that educationalists at all levels are primarily concerned.”

There has been some research regarding what constitutes *good education* abroad as well as in the States. All research reaches similar conclusions. We will cite the extensive longitudinal study made by Weikart and Schweinart, called the Perry Preschool Project from 1968 to 1980. (They have extended it for another 20 years, soon to be published, with the same pool of subjects.) Though its target has been Afro-Americans of economically poor backgrounds, we believe the research has some relevant pertinence for other social groups. It involves 123 children and had a control group of the same size. It was funded by various public and private sources to the tune of \$18 million dollars. Here is an edited summary of the findings:

“On 48 measures of school and life success, the study shows that by age 15, the latest age for which complete evidence is available, children who attended a quality preschool on average significantly outperformed children who had not.”

This was assessed by various tests of intelligence, academic achievements and social development, an examination of public school records every year till 4th grade, and, through age eight and nine, extensive interviews with these children and their parents.

The researchers claim that their findings "...strongly refute the common belief that the effects of preschool wither away or I.Q.'s are the only effects worth considering." It also strongly suggests that a *quality program* is the key difference. According to these researchers, such a program has to share these main characteristics:

- 1) *Good management and monitoring;*
- 2) *Parents need to have substantial involvement in their children's education;*
- 3) *At least 2 teachers should be in the classroom to provide overall support and individual attention;*
- 4) *There should be a high degree of teacher-child interaction, with the child initiating most of the activity;*
- 5) *Program should be consistent to provide consistency in learning;*
- 6) *Teachers should be trained in curriculum development and work as a team.*

**It makes it clear that quality curriculum contains serious knowledge of various subject matter with individual approaches, tailored to a deep professional understanding of child development.** This is way beyond only custodial care and nurture, which should be taken for granted. It means physical, socio-emotional and linguistic topics matter. It means being versed in science, mathematics, literature, arts and music, and their relevance to early childhood education matters. These topics are not addressed, however, in the formal "academic sense" which is relevant years later in a child's development. Opportunities for children to learn aspects of appropriate subject matter is, of course, through the informal process of play initiative, exploration, self-direction and discovery where body and mind are in direct interaction with the environment. This integrated learning can only take place within a social interaction setting where skillful teachers consistently socially educate (rather than just socialize) children in their social and object encounters in the school environment.

It makes it clear also that parent's involvement has to take some form of education. Simple recipes to socially educate their children quickly evaporate in a short time. Involvement means parents' commitment and responsibility within a regular attendance in a school session, such as co-oping, in seminars, etc. to *understand* not only their child at that moment in development and learning, but *understanding* other children as well. It means reflecting on children's issues and curiosity, therefore, enjoying the value of early childhood and education. It means that not only teachers have to work as a team, but through their increasing understanding, parents become the best advocates, just as teachers should, for children's appropriate quality education.

Shall we say that we need to join the best scientists, artists, musicians and writers who dwell with a process of infinite questions which open a vista of *possible* answers that provoke more questions? Educating a young child, or anyone for that matter, is an art. In a quality preschool, it's an art and a science.

## Spring Calendar

January 13	Workshop/Seminar: Children's Literature
January 17	Martin Luther King Day – NO SCHOOL
January 18	4-day Session Meeting
January 25	Board Meeting
January 26	2-day Session Meeting
January 31	3-day Session Meeting
February	See Fundraiser Report for <b>Required Committee Meetings</b>
February 22	Board Meeting
March 5	<b>32<sup>nd</sup> Annual Fundraiser</b> , 6-10 pm, Gatehouse – <b>Required</b>
March 7	NO SCHOOL – Day after Fundraiser
March 18	NO SCHOOL – Parent/Teacher Conferences
March 21-25	NO SCHOOL – Spring Break – Parent/Teacher Conferences
March 29	Board Meeting
April 5	2-day Session Meeting
April 11	Workshop/Seminar: TBD
April 19	<b>Semi-Annual Meeting – Required</b>
April 26	Board Meeting
May 4	3-day Session Meeting
May 12	4-day Session Meeting
May 17	New Family Orientation
May 22	All School Picnic – Families Welcome – 4-7 pm
May 26	2-day Session Meeting
May 30	Memorial Day – NO SCHOOL
May 31	Board Meeting
June 3	Last Day of School

- All meetings are from 7:00 – 9:00 pm at Our School Preschool unless otherwise noted. Please plan to attend the whole meeting.
- Meetings are for parents only unless labeled as All School or Families Welcome.
- Workshop/seminars are open to the public. Bring a friend!

## 2005 Auction Items List

- Electronic Light-up Drum Set  
Baby Bedding Set in a Bag  
Baby Variety Gift Set (rattle, blanket, onesie, knit hat)  
Ladies tops from India  
Wood "Medicine" Cabinet  
Mary Kay Spa - Cleanser, Soak, Mist, Nail Polish, Body Sponge, Cuticle Cream, and Bags  
Pendulum Table-top Clock  
Two Hand-knit infant hats, size 6-18mo and size small  
Grand Rabbits White Plush Tiger & \$20 Gift Certificate  
Rags to Riches \$50 Gift Certificate plus t-shirt and suckers  
Red Sweater made by Stitch  
Exercise ball for 5'7" - 6'1"  
Gold & Silver Plated Pave Set  
Cubic Zirconium Bracelet  
Hand-crafted purse from Nepal  
Brewing Market Gift Basket  
10 Free days of parking at DIA  
One Free Mount or Tune  
Complimentary Weekend Car Rental  
\$150 Carpet Cleaning  
1-1/2 hour Tarot & Astrology Consultation  
Punchcard for 5 Mosaic Movement Arts classes  
A signed copy of *The Tree of Avalon* by T.A. Barron, plus *Rakkety Tam* by Brian Jacques, Novels *Travel Team* and *The Teacher's Funeral*, plus *A Light in the Attic* with CD *The Jungle Book*, *The Little Mermaid*, *The Nightingale*, *The Wizard of Oz*, and *Museum 1-2-3*  
Hand Painted Rocking Chair  
Antique Mantel Clock
- 8 music classes for kids  
5'3" x 7'9" Area Rug  
Black rubber boa handmade from recycled bicycle tubes  
SFL Pigskin Satchel (by Wilson)  
"Wild at Heart" Infant/Toddler Quilt  
DVD and CD R/RW Burner  
Halo 2 and Oddworld - Munch's Oddysee for X-Box, plus Microsoft Coffee Mug  
Sneakers and Grabbed by the Ghoulies for X-Box, both rated Everyone by the ESRB  
Necklace and Earrings  
\$20 Gift Certificate & Tea from The Tea Spot  
Handmade Cape by Jacqueline Painting  
2-Hour Interior Design Consultation  
Wooden hand-painted step-stool  
\$1000 Gift Basket from Lakeshore Athletic Club  
Our School Preschool Pottery  
2 Tickets to "The Madwoman of Chaillot" Playing March 24-31  
2-Hour Mediation Session of Any Type of Dispute  
2-Hour Couple or Individual Counseling Session  
Chiropractic New Patient Exam, 1 area x-ray, first adjustment, dry hydrotherapy – 1 child, 1 adult  
\$50 Gift Certificate at Superior Postnet (by Super Target)  
Buy 3 weeks get a 4th week free, or one free 6-week session Coupon  
Book with 5 full service car wash tickets  
\$100 Gift Card, useable at any Ace Hardware  
\$100 On-site Dog Grooming  
Family Portrait Session

Candles, room spray, bookmark, auto gold, wick dipper, votives, tea lights  
Custom Roman Shade w/ bottom tabs & rod  
Eldorado Springs Swimming Pool Season Pass for 2 adults and 2 kids  
2 Denver Bronco Tickets  
Hand-painted china  
Homemade Biscotti  
Porcelain Dispenser & Stand for Eldorado Springs Natural Spring Water  
One week at charming old Puerto Vallarta Condo sleeps 4, w/ maid service, kitchen, balcony, ocean view  
Virus Removal, Spyware, Adware, and Pop-up removal, MS Office and Network PC consulting  
4 Tickets to Boulder Philharmonic Orchestra Performance thru 4/22/05  
\$50 voucher toward purchase of season tickets for 2005-2006 Boulder Philharmonic Orchestra Season  
\$50 Gift Card redeemable at the Country Fair Garden Center in Arvada  
Four Months in the Wine-of-the-Month Club  
Brooks Running Shoes & Gait Analysis  
5-days of Dog Walking  
10-pose sitting and 8x10 portrait  
Entertainment of 1 hour of classical music played on violin/flute & cello duo at a wedding or event  
\$50 toward Sherwin Williams Paint  
One Free 4-week Childrens' Art Class Session

#### Gift Certificates:

\$25 Gift Certificate at Java Java  
Two \$25 Gift Certificate at Krisha Groceries  
Two \$25 Gift Certificate at Pasquini's  
\$25 Gift Certificate at Peaks Hair Salon  
\$25 Gift Certificate at the Delish  
\$30 (two \$15) Gift Certificate at Casa Alvarez  
\$30 Gift Certificate at Cannon Mine Coffee  
\$25 Gift Certificate at Via Toscana  
\$25 Gift Certificate for the Hunan Garden  
\$30 (two \$15) Gift Certificate to The Blue Parrot  
Rezzo Restaurant Reloadable Gift Card loaded with \$50  
\$50 Gift Certificate to the Full Moon Grill

#### Health & Beauty:

All Over Color and Haircut  
One hair cut and style  
\$65 Certificate for Full Body Wrap  
95<sup>th</sup> St. Salon La Petite Facial Certificate  
Fresh Hair Haircut, Wash and Style  
\$35 hair services gift certificate & Phytobetites gift basket  
One haircut  
Massage Gift Certificate  
60 Minute Massage  
One-hour Massage  
1-hour Swedish massage  
1-hour massage