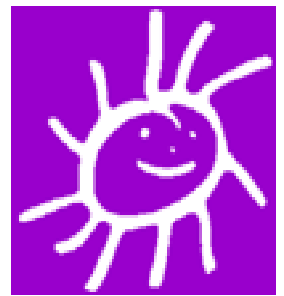


The Children's Center at Caltech



January-February

2006

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Upcoming Activities

Board Meeting:

7:00 p.m.

Room 239, Moore Lab

Monday, February 27th

Upcoming Holiday

Monday, February 20th

President's Day
CENTER CLOSED

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

From Susan's Desk

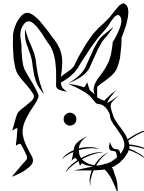
A big thank you to all that gave matching gift campaign. \$5,800.00 was collected by December 31st and our secret philanthropist matched the amount bringing the CCC \$11,600 closer to building the CCC Arts and Science Laboratory. We are all very excited at the possibility that we may be able to break ground on the Lab this summer.

The planning for the Fourth Annual Evening Under the Stars has already begun. This year we hope to reach our goal of \$30k. The Fundraising committee, chaired by Linda Breen (the Beaver Mom of Erin), could really use your help.

The first step in preparing for this wonderful is the procurement of auction items. Before you think, as I did, "I can't ask people for free stuff" read the article entitled, "How to Get Free Stuff (for a Good Cause" in this newsletter. Letters with the CCC's Tax ID are available in the classrooms and the office.

Hope to see you all on May 20th at Avery for the 4th Annual "Evening Under the Stars!"

Bunny Hopping



The Bunnies would like to welcome our newest student, Claudio Bastiani-Fonck.

He had joined our class mid-December and has been blossoming ever since. We are delighted to be working with him and his family!

All of the Bunnies have been progressing extremely well in their development over the last few months. For instance: Alison, Hannah, Hanu and Owen are using two word sentences, running, and demonstrating an understanding of basic physics; and they are all under the age of 18 months!

All of the Bunnies are amazing and are maturing in ways that blow our minds. All we can say is WOW and way to go Bunnies!!!!

Oh where . . .

Oh where has my little Paci gone?

Oh where oh where can it be???

The Bunnies have lost all of the spare pacifiers they use to comfort children who left their own pacifier home for that day. Parents, if you've seen a CCC pacifier could you please send it back home to the CCC, or if you would like to donate some new pacifiers we would enjoy that as well.

A gentle reminder for all visiting guests of the Bunnies:

- If I am bigger than a Bunny I walk at a snail's pace.
- If I am bigger than a Bunny I keep my feet on the ground.
- If I am bigger than a Bunny I talk as soft as a kitten.
- If I am bigger than a Bunny I let the babies play as they may.

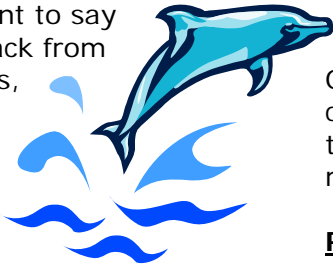
Please keep in mind that in the classroom the Bunny Babies reign. Thank you!



Dolphin Splash

Hello Dolphin Parents,

First we want to say welcome back from the Holidays, and your vacations away.



The staff also had a chance to take advantage of the low class attendance, and rotate days off to spend extra time with their families.

The teachers can see a big growth spurt within the classroom. The children are exploring wildly:

- vocabulary,
- joining along on some of our favorite songs, and
- helping to assist their friends during transition time.

As the children display more cognitive, language, social, and motor skills, we reluctantly have to say "see you later" as they transition to the Penguin classroom.

Douglas and Cassidy recently transitioned to the Penguins. We miss you! Thank you to the Cohn and Pyle families.

We have welcomed two new families to our class:

- Samantha from the Bunnies, and
- Sridhar who is joining us at the CCC for a short while.

So while we are continuing to grow we are looking at "Movement" with a focus on "All about Me" and the central

concentration of "how my body moves examples of this would be:

- how we take off shoes,
- how we potty train, and
- how we discover new ways to climb and jump.

One activity was that we gave the children individual mirrors to look at themselves to see how they could move doing facial movements.

Reminders:

- Please take blankets home for washing on Friday evenings
- Parent work hours are available for rest sitting
 - Each Tuesday 1:30 – 2:30
 - Once a month on Wednesdays TBA
- Parent Ed. Workshops
- Classroom work Saturday

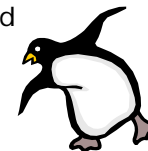
Penguin Parade

Please join us in wishing Retha a Happy Birthday! Retha's birthday is on January 18th.



We would like to welcome to the Penguin Room:

- Douglas, who is moving from the Dolphin Room, and
- **Sara Karapdia**, our newest teacher!



We are happy to have you with us.

We wish to send good luck and good-bye to Pablo who moved to the Koala room!



In the classroom, our curriculum was looking at "things that roll" over the past few weeks and are now focusing on Energy. We are investigating "things that fly."

We will be asking the children:

- "What flies?"
- "Which animals have wings?"
- "Why do birds need wings and feathers?"

And we will ask many more questions as we explore our new topic.

The children adopted, "I've Been Working on the Railroad" as their favorite song and it has become a bit of the theme song for the Penguin classroom.

We would like to send home small song books of songs we are all singing that are also relevant to the curriculum and to continue to bridge the bond connecting home and school.

Reminder:

- Please label all clothes, including socks.
- Please help your child turn his or her photo card over in the morning. Turning it back in the evening is a good transitional activity to help in saying good-bye.

Parent Volunteer Hours available:

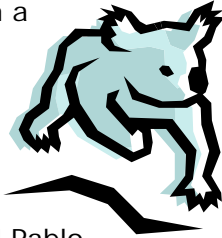
- Rest sitting from 2:00 – 3:00 pm each Tuesday
- Rest sitting from 1:30 – 3:00 pm every 3rd Wednesday of each month.
- Help with the song books.
- Develop film of the classroom photos.



Koala Korner

Happy New Year!!!

We hope that everyone is having a wonderful January 2006. It has been a very exciting time in the Koala room.



We would like to welcome with open arms, Isabel Simons and Pablo Backer Peral.

We would also like to wish Liam Krestow goodbye as he moved into the Raccoon room.

The Koalas have been learning new things everyday. As we have begun to look at *animate vs. inanimate*, the children have learned the difference between pretend and real.

Most recently the class is discovering machines.

We have looked at various machines: blenders, bicycles, fire trucks, motors, turn-tables and records, and much more.

Many koalas have their own idea of what is a machine. Alem says that "Dad has a running machine that he runs on." Matthew has talked about his washing machine numerous times. The entire classroom has a new wealth of knowledge to build on.

We have also been learning about superheroes. We have discussed the ones in stories as well as firefighters, people who help others, and many other real-life role models who are heroes.

The children have memorized "The Three Little Pigs," "Jack and the Beanstalk," and "Goldilocks and the three Bears." With their new information from these fairytales the Koalas have created their own story. Make sure to read in when you stop by the room.

We look forward to learning more about inanimate objects.

We leave you with this thought:

"Kids: they dance before they learn there is anything that isn't music."
~William Stafford

Raccoon Roundup

Welcome back everyone from your vacations. I'm glad we are back to our regular routine.



The Raccoons have jumped into the swing of things. We are currently investigating systems and interactions by looking at our community.

During the month of January we looked at the library and the supermarket. We took a better look at their components and their systems. The children experienced the inner workings of a library. We created a mini Library. Children made library cards, and books, and had an opportunity to play the role of the Librarian.

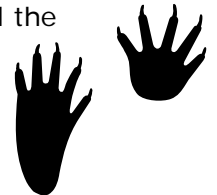
We were fortunate enough to receive a personal tour of Trader Joe's. Thank you to Dennis Norden for welcoming us. It was a fantastic experience for the children – and parents that accompanied us – on our trip.

TRADER JOE'S

On our walk we looked around us and talked about our community. We saw construction, signs, stores, buildings, and people.

At Trader Joe's we explored the inner workings of a supermarket. We toured the different departments of the store including the free sampling booth! The Raccoons' favorite area was the back room. Dennis demonstrated the bailer. The bailer is a machine that compacted cardboard boxes in order to ship them to the recycling center. It was an exciting time.

Thank you to all the parents that helped us on our walk. It was appreciated!



Beaver Tales

Curriculum planning within a DAP (*Developmentally Appropriate Practices*) framework is based primarily upon the *interests* and inquiries of children during their play and explorations.



Keeping in mind that the key components of age, individual development, and socio-cultural influences are factored; the interest and curiosity of exploring *internal/external* relationships were analyzed through "The Human Body" and "Our Pets."

We therefore engaged in the following activities and processes:

- checking our heartbeats after exercising and running laps;
- comparing the circumferences of our body parts via estimations in mathematics;
- creating our own finger/thumb prints for individual and artistic reflections;
- painting and representing visually our faces "Picasso"esque-like;
- comparing and measuring our heights;
- exploring with 3-D models of clay and dough to create internal/external body parts;
- conducting science activities that dealt with our five senses;
- creating our own Food Pyramid based on foods meaningful to us, while comparing the desired amounts through tiered levels;
- reflecting and drawing pets we have encountered in real life; and
- exploring the internal roles of the brain, the esophagus, the lungs, the heart, the muscles/bones, and other vital parts as they relate to our own physical, cognitive, and health/safety awareness of self and the environment.

Curriculum planning also includes the vital relationship of school and home, particularly the role of

families. The triangular relationship of the child's learning, the school, and the home is solidified through the following enrichments:

- (a) *Discovery Take-home Packs*, where the Beavers have enjoyed exploring activities and concepts at home with their families, and bringing back their findings to school (NOTE: check-out our Displayed Board above the children's cubbies);
- (b) Participation of parents who joined in the Parent Education Workshop, given by one of our own parents, Patricia Herrera-Nieto (David's mother) on the topic, "Special Needs/Autism;" and
- (c) Books that children bring from home to share during our literacy group times reflecting various genres (e.g., comedy, fiction, fairy tales, classics, chapter books, rhyme books, informational, comics with heroes/heroines, magazines, library books, etc.).

The motivation for reading and literacy discussions has increased multi-fold! Thank you to each and everyone of you! Thank you also to our Room Parents (Rebecca and Rachel), and our Rest Sitters for everything.

Finally, thank you to the 23 families who participated in the Parent Conferences with me, and the insight and input throughout the Kindergarten recommendation-entrance process. Each and everyone's perspectives have been valued and heeded with great respect. I thank you all. 'Til next time . . .



From the Editors

The days are getting a bit longer and it is not dark when we pick up our children at the end of the day. The holidays are a faint memory, as the new toys are now mixed in with the rest and have taken their place among the menagerie and the shelves.

Yet, we find ourselves amidst that stretch awaiting springtime and the summer's return.

In our family, we work with the growing glossary of our two-year-old. She has new words every day. We - as parents - are grateful for those times we manage restraint upon stubbing a toe or dropping something breakable and remember not to use a word better off omitted from her vocabulary.

We concentrate on taking skills learned in Kindergarten and help tighten them for our five-year-old. She reads, but lacks the confidence to realize it. We witness in her the application of years of comprehension working and the new skills and talents that come thrill us.

The projects at home continue to be put off until we can schedule them between the play dates and the volunteer commitments and the jobs and the regular chores.

And if we take a breath and look at where we are, we see how fast time is moving. As a favored song writer penned, "Life is short, but the days and nights are long." (~Cheryl Wheeler)

May these days bring joyfulness to your family.

-Erin & Sam



From the Board

Dear CCC Parents,

Thanks once again to everyone who contributed to making the Matching Fund an incredible success.

The Facilities Committee of the Board has been and continues to be very busy working with the architect and the Architectural & Engineering group at Caltech on moving forward with the Science and Art Lab. In January, the Facilities Committee visited several science labs at local schools (Walden and Polytechnic most recently) for inspiration and advice.

The Board of Trustees is rejuvenated each year by the addition of new members, and in the spring we formally announce the opportunity to run for a Board position in the June election. However, it is not too early to let us know if you are interested in joining the Board, or if you wish to nominate another parent or an interested community member.

Please contact any member of the Board if you are interested in bringing your own energy and commitment to the group, or if you would like to nominate someone.

Want to learn more about what we do? Parents are always welcome to attend any of our monthly meetings; the next Board of Trustees meeting will be Monday, February 27, 2006 (room 239 Moore on campus).

Our annual fundraiser is coming up on May 20th – by all means save the date! Details will be coming to you from all directions in the near future... but especially for those of you who have not yet attended one of the CCC's fundraisers: you can look forward to enjoying the company of friends on a warm spring evening, and participating in silent and live auctions. And of course, dinner...music...and a genuinely relaxed and convivial evening.

The Fundraising Committee is collecting all kinds of things for the silent and live auctions:

- ✓ event tickets
- ✓ gift certificates
- ✓ artwork

What would you like to donate? All parents are encouraged to contribute items for the auctions.

In the past, donations have ranged from vacation home stays to very cool handmade doll beds to Dodger tickets to organic vegetable delivery. Please use your imagination!

~ Marianne Epalle
President
CCC Board of Trustees

How to Get Free Stuff (For a Good Cause)

~ *Liz Schiller*

You can get work hours by spending money on items for your room's gift basket.

But you may not realize that you can get amazing items for free when you simply ask on behalf of a worthy cause.

Over the years, I have asked many different businesses for in-kind donations. (In-kind is another word for anything other than money – it could be stuff, or services.) I have rarely been turned down. I've gotten dozens of bagels, crepes, ice cream, grocery store and bookstore gift certificates, restaurant meals, bottles of wine, and a wine tasting for six, to name just a few examples.

Think about it from the business point of view. For example, if you run a restaurant, there isn't much expense involved in giving away a free dinner for two, and you may get a new customer out of it.

For a hotel, that room might have been empty anyway, so it's a net gain if the people using the gift certificate order room service or have a drink in the bar.

Giving to a good cause gets a business's name out in the community and generates goodwill.

How do you do it? Just smile and ask. If you're already a customer, you should mention it. Be sure to have a copy of the charity's tax letter, and be prepared to provide a letter on the charity's letterhead that says the same things you say in person – the cause, the date of the event, and what you're asking for or what they agree to give. You'll want to personalize the letter so it's addressed to the specific business.

What to say on the phone or in person

Hi, my name is [your name]. Could I speak with the person who makes decisions about in-kind donations?

I'm helping with a fundraiser for the Caltech Children's Center, a really great nonprofit daycare where my son/daughter/kids go. We're having an auction at our spring dinner on May 20th and I'd love to include [name the thing for which you're asking]. I love [name of business] and so do a lot of the other parents. Do you think [business] can give [item]?

The person may need to go to a committee or other decision makers. That's why it's important to start as early as possible, so the businesses have plenty of time to make a decision if they need it.

They will most likely ask for something in writing, which you can fax to them or drop off.

Ideas for Auction Donations

Suggestions from many on-line sources for great items for donations for a silent or live auction are provided in the following list:

- ✓ Juice Shop Certificates
- ✓ Wine Tasting Event
- ✓ Restaurant Certificates
- ✓ Pamper Package Certificates:
 - Spa Day
 - Facial
 - Manicure/Pedicure
 - Massage
- ✓ Autographed Sporting Goods
- ✓ Ski Condo Weekend
- ✓ Autographed Scripts
- ✓ Autographed Books
- ✓ Gourmet Foods Or Chocolates
- ✓ Movie Packages
- ✓ Dance Lessons Certificates
- ✓ Birthday Parties
- ✓ Electronics
- ✓ Jewelry
- ✓ Stationery
- ✓ Auto Detailing Certificates
- ✓ Pet-Sitting Services
- ✓ Designer Handbags or Sunglasses
- ✓ Educational Gifts:
 - Book baskets
 - Lectures
 - Lab tours
- ✓ Hot Air Balloon Ride
- ✓ Weekend Get-Away:
 - Yosemite
 - Wine Country
 - Bed & Breakfast
- ✓ Memberships:
 - Zoos
 - Aquariums
 - Museums
 - Kidspace
- ✓ Series Tickets:
 - Symphony
 - Opera
 - Theatre
 - Lecture
- ✓ Theme Party Host:
 - Poker
 - Fiesta
 - BBQ
 - Art
- ✓ Homemade Crafts:
 - Quilts
 - Knit goods
 - Photographs
 - Artwork
- ✓ Hobby Supplies:
 - Scrapbooking
 - Stamps
- ✓ Car Wash Certificates
- ✓ Coffee Shop Certificates

