

# Mansfield Children's Center

## News and Notes

Fall 2011

### *We had a FIELD DAY!!*

Brainchild of Ashley Fallon, MCC's First Annual Field Day brought the whole school outside together for a morning of challenging physical events and a yard-wide scavenger hunt decathlon.

Teams, consisting of teachers, school agers, preschoolers, and toddlers, moved through various field events. They ran the obstacle course and a relay race, competed in beach ball volleyball, played charades, and had a wet dash on the slip and slide, to name a few. The school agers helped the younger children and the younger children challenged themselves in these new events.



Then the teams worked together, deciphering clues, problem solving, and testing their mettle in the champion of all scavenger hunts. In order to earn all of the clues in the scavenger hunt decathlon, teams had to meet and overcome the challenges in each area: the wagon relay, the garden quizzer, the human pyramid, the water relay, the parachute contest, the ramp building puzzle, the butterfly identification test, the toddler song serenade, and the group art project.



After a refreshing snack break, we were all surprised by a School Age Dancing Flash Mob. Who knew that all summer, they were secretly practicing all those fancy dance moves? And we all had fun, joining in with moves of our own.

Can't wait until next year's Field Day!

## Tenth Annual Arts Festival Festivities

What a terrific Arts Festival we had once again! The children are thrilled to have their family members come for the day's activities and performances. Preparing for their part in the performance, whether it is a role center stage or a job behind the scenes, the children gain and practice so many important skills. They rely on team work and cooperation as they listen for their cues, practice empathy when they help each other learn their lines, put their creative abilities and the skills they learn in MCC's Drawing Curriculum to work making props, costumes, and scenery, and gain confidence in themselves as they challenge themselves and find success with a difficult role, for example.

The children also put their knowledge of the natural world to work in developing their skits. Their performances brought our Natural Science Curriculum to life in creative and comical ways. And the School Ager's reprise of Leonard P. Snarf's masterpiece, "Eugene Extreme, the Monster, and Queen Prestine" illustrated, in lively fashion, the dangers of extremism.



## DVD's Available

If you would like a copy of our 2001 and/or 2010 DVD which features the Arts Festival and includes other events, please call the office and let us know. Tara has been making and distributing copies as requested. (A small, \$5.00, donation is appreciated.)

## Center News

### Fall Changes

Our summer program is over, children are heading back to school, and we've welcomed some new children and their families into our fall program in all groups. We're looking forward to a couple of weeks of settling in and getting to know each other – and some sunny fall weather.

### New Staff

We've said good-bye to our summer staff and to those heading off to school this fall and have welcomed some new staff members.



In the Infant Room, Linda Tracey, Susan Houghton, and Libby Cook have been joined by Melanie Charron. Melanie is teacher qualified and has had previous experience floating with infants, toddlers, and preschoolers.

Our Sprout/Toddler Staff, Kate Churchill, Karina Villa-Duran, MaryBeth Garneau, and Katie Connery will be working this fall with Leah Carbary and Molly Davidson. Leah homeschooled her three daughters and worked as a teacher's aide at a local private school. Molly has just finished her associate's degree in early childhood education and is happy to be gaining some more hands-

on experience with our older infants and younger toddlers.

In the Discovery Room, Lilly Beatrice and Karen Moffat are working this fall with a mixed group of older toddlers and younger preschoolers. Courtney Keene is joined by Amanda Deavellar in the Block Room teaching preschoolers. Amanda graduated this spring from Northeastern University with her degree in psychology and elementary education.

Marybeth Cabana and Megan McClay again teach preschoolers in the PK1 area. Alison Innes will teach our kindergarten program this fall.

Colleen Tweedy will teach the Morning Preschool Program for the second year. She and Bethany Edwards will be working with the school agers after school and Katie Connery will open the school age program in the morning. Bethany has a degree in psychology and has experience working with teenagers and school agers.

Our floats this fall will be Tara Scarlett and Robyn Ceckowski. Robyn has six years' experience with preschoolers and floating.

Shirley Hanlon and Sandi Hobson continue to manage all office matters.



Donna Smith, Sandy Regan and Betsey Bullock mentor teachers and organize and coordinate the many details of our program.

Once again, Jeanne Fallon, Kevin Fallon and John Pangburn, directors, welcome you and your families to our new school year.

### **Fall Parent Meetings**

We'll be scheduling evening meetings this fall for staff and parents. This is a good opportunity to get together, talk about curriculum, program initiatives, and other items of interest. Watch your child's classroom white board for dates and times.

### **Immunization Update from the Office**

Sandi Hobson, our office coordinator, will be working on a state required report this fall concerning children's immunizations. All children's records must be current and on file upon enrollment and updated based on the state requirements.



### **Classroom Note**

The **toddlers** had a busy summer! We began by planting seeds in the garden. We planted green beans, cucumbers, and pumpkins. The children watered the garden daily and were rewarded with lots of green beans to snack on.

In the classroom the children watched both Painted Lady and Monarch caterpillars eat and grow with noticeable changes each day. The caterpillars then went into chrysalis form to emerge less than two weeks later as butterflies. The toddlers then released the butterflies into the atrium to be released into the wild two days later.

Our themes this summer were “Beach” and “Under the Sea”. We read, sang, played games, talked, and created art work around these themes. Most children were also able to visit the beach over the summer so we could talk about their real life experiences. At school we stayed cool with water play, ice pops, and daily swims in the wading pools.

Some of the older toddlers participated in our first annual field day. Relay races, obstacle courses, and a school wide dance were lots of fun. The younger toddlers were treated to many songs from the older children of the school as part of their scavenger hunt.

Arts Festival was also a fun filled day for toddlers as many parents were able to join us for the morning portion of the day. The children enjoyed the performances and an afternoon swim time.

**PK1** had a busy summer. After spotting butterflies all around MCC, we got to do some butterfly sighting at the Butterfly Place in Westford. We also took a trip to Blue Hills to do some hiking. Attending the live performance of “Snow White” at the Kaleidoscope Theater helped prepare us for our Arts Festival performance. We all put in our best effort for that and it really showed. We loved performing for the audience.

