

March 2012



Mount Kisco Child Care Center PARENT CONNECTION – A family newsletter

Dear Parents:

Thank you for the wonderful feedback you gave us about last month's premiere issue of "Parent Connection." We are so pleased with the response and continue to welcome your input.

This month we want to encourage you to join us on March 10th for the Mt. Kisco St. Patrick's Day Parade, organized by MKCCC parent William McCormack. Join us for a quick lunch at the Center from 12:00 – 12:30 before we all head over to the Parade. Children can "march" in strollers, in little red wagons, on shoulders, on tricycles, etc. We hope you'll join us for a fun afternoon.

And in the spirit of family, we are looking for MKCCC's Grandparents to help us celebrate **Grandparent's Day** in September. We see so many wonderful grandparents throughout the Center each weekday, and if your child's grandparents would like to get more involved with us and help plan Grandparent's Day festivities in the Fall, please have them contact Keri at x243.



Warmly,

Dottie Jordan, Executive Director

JOIN THE COMMITTEE!

Parents, we want your involvement in planning our 2012 FEED ME FRESH benefit in September! If you'd like to lend your time and your talents towards making this a super-fundraiser for MKCCC, please contact Keri Reitman, at x243 or kreitman@mkccc.org.

Mark your calendar:

March 10th:
MKCCC in Mt. Kisco St.
Patrick's Day Parade

April 5th:
Poker Night to benefit
MKCCC at Quaker Hill
Tavern

April 22-28:
Week of the Young Child
April 21 or 28:
Spring Clean-up Day

June 15:
Family Concert to
benefit MKCCC

Congratulations!

A new sister for Jackson,
Lily Brooke Hoffman
born February 10th and
a new sister for Mia & Jake,
Abigail Renee Schwarzfeld
born February 16th



Feed Me Fresh Kitchen welcomes Chef Lisa Koschak

We are so very glad to welcome Culinary Institute of American graduate Lisa Koschak to our full-time FEED ME FRESH Kitchen staff. Lisa, who has worked at MKCCC part-time since December 2010, has filled the position vacated by Janet Morris. Before working at MKCCC Lisa worked at such restaurants as An American Place and Chanterelle, as well as at The Beekman Arms in Rhinebeck. Welcome, Lisa!

In the Spotlight – Annual Plant Sale

by Renee DeVincenzo, Administrative Assistant

It is that time of year again to say "GOODBYE WINTER" and "HELLO SPRING!" Last year, We are proud that 500 plants were sold and \$5,000 (net) was raised for our Scholarship Initiative in 2011. The top three sellers were Debra Stellio (36), Maciel Burgos (30) and Sarah Tucker (30). Each received a basket filled with goodies and our Top Seller, Debra Stellio, received a \$25 Gift Certificate in her basket to La Mer Seafood in Armonk.

This year we aim to raise more money than last year, and it can only happen with your help! I am happy to announce our MKCCC Plant Sale Committee for this year are parents Nancy Friery, Debra Stellio, and Kelly Sullivan and our good friend Rebecca Cerutti. This committee will be helping me to organize the sale.

Fundraising packets will be available the week of March 26th for anyone who would like one. All pre-orders will need to be handed in by April 26th. If you would like to know how you can help or be a part of the committee, please call me or send an e-mail to rdevincenzo@mkccc.org. Happy Spring!

News from the Classrooms



Winter was a very exciting time for **INFANTS**. Angelina, Ivana, Jayden, Neil and Sebastian all celebrated their first birthday! We also got to explore with the snow and ice – it is really cold!

The **TODDLERS** had a great time in February celebrating Valentine's Day. Thanks for the delicious treats! We learned a lot about the Post Office, how we keep our bodies healthy, and dental health. Miss Natalie of Toddler C celebrated her birthday! Toddler B is glad to welcome our new Assistant Teacher, Miss Laura.

We've been very busy in **PRESCHOOL** too, learning about birds, shadows, frogs, healthy foods and how to be a good friend. The children celebrated Groundhog Day and Valentine's Day last month. They've also been spending a lot of time outside enjoying the "spring-like" weather and visiting our Greenhouse and compost bin.

In February, the **SCHOOL AGE** children enjoyed their outside time playing football and "Capture the Flag." They had a blast with our challenge time where children built home structures out of playing cards or toothpicks with marshmallows. Currently, children are enjoying the time playing "Where in the World is Carmen Sandiego." In March, we are looking forward to more exciting challenge time projects and outdoor play.

Feed Me Fresh *by Dr. Susan Rubin*

Vermiculture? What's that? The children in the **AFTERSCHOOL** program learned all about composting with worms (vermiculture) in February. This form of composting uses vegetable scraps ("greens") and newspaper strips ("browns"). In the large compost bins, we use leaves or straw as the "browns" and in the worm compost bin, we use shredded paper for the browns. Compost in the big bins is great for adding to the soil in the garden. Compost made by worms is like vitamins for the plants in the garden - super nutrient dense!

Children quickly got over the "yecch factor" once they saw how cute and shy the worms can be. Each child took a turn moving a worm or two into their new worm bin. Many were mesmerized and had no qualms about handling the worm with their hands, and for those who were shy, we had gloves and spoons.

The children also got to witness "worm love" (use your imagination) and even saw a worm lay eggs! In all my 2+ years of "worm farming" I've never been lucky to see such a thing!



JEWEL *by Nancy Loden, Intergenerational Coordinator*

JEWEL is busy with many projects! Preschool C and the older adults have planted seeds that were placed in the greenhouse. They are starting to grow. With the collaboration of Preschool C and 4 older adults from My Second Home (MSH), the information gathered from the project, along with other JEWEL programs, will be presented at the New York State Intergenerational Network (NYSigN) Conference on March 15 at Manhattanville College. Since the start of the additional JEWEL program, we have planted the seeds and monitored their growth in the greenhouse, played vegetable bingo, prepared and eaten a spinach salad and each pair of older adult and child cut out their favorite fruits and vegetables and made a collage with the pictures.



March brings the hope of spring. The staff from MKCCC/MSH is planning water color paintings, feeling box guessing game, a scavenger hunt, and spring collage to explore a variety of materials and dancing with bubbles. The music program continues to grow due to the hard work of Gina Bergamini, head teacher from Preschool B. The dog therapy, with Elspeth the Old English Sheep Dog, is very patient with both the older adults and children.

We recently had a magical moment with the older adults and the school age children, who were off from school. The children had made a special dessert and invited the older adults for a tasting. After the children served the dessert they made, one child started by asking the older adults about what they wanted to be when they were school age children. One question lead to the next and so much information was exchanged, all from one question.

The Bottom Line from Ruth Goodman, MSW

Last week I attended a three day training on the subject of nurturing parenting. Of the many components discussed, one struck me as particularly important to share. Simply put, **in order to nurture our children we must nurture ourselves**. As a working mother, I am aware of the challenge that this seemingly easy mandate can present. Where is the time to do anything nice and comforting for ourselves when we are busy meeting the needs of our kids and families, and the demands of our job? In exploring this topic with other participants, I was able to identify some ways in which I can "nurture" myself without taking up valuable, precious family time, and without spending any money! The first step is knowing the things that do feel good to us. There are material things of course, but also much more. Consider every sense. There are sights, sounds, smells tastes and touches that give us pleasure. If you are a music lover make sure to listen. If you have a fragrance that you like, or that brings positive associations surround yourself with it. Choose the flavor ice cream that you like, once in a while, even if it's not everyone else's favorite. Also try to measure your day by your accomplishments and successes. There will always be something that we wish we had gotten to but didn't. It will be there waiting for you tomorrow.