ACADEMY A.R.T.S. NEWS

The Academy of Movement and Music *605 Lake Street* *Oak Park, Illinois* *(708) 848-2329*

MAY 2009 *VOL. 13, NO. 8*

A YEAR-END NOTE

We are fast approaching the end of this school year and it is important to take this opportunity to thank each and every family for making this year special. The children have grown not only physically, but also cognitively, emotionally, and socially as well. This comes about through the combined efforts of teachers, children, and parents. Not nearly as much could have been accomplished, or many times even attempted, without the unwavering support of our parent population. Your cooperation and generosity in terms of time and resources have been very much appreciated.

To those families with children who are graduating from the A.R.T.S. program and to those who will not be returning in the fall, thank you for having chosen the Academy to be a part of your child's preschool years. On these last days of school, we are as sad to see our students move on as they were when they first separated from you to come to the Academy some 1, 2, or 3 years ago. We hope to see you in dance, music, or production classes in the future.

We do not have a formal "exit" interview in the A.R.T.S. program. However, if you have chosen to enroll your child in another preschool for the fall and have not spoken to any of our staff about this matter, your child's dean would appreciate hearing from you. We constantly strive to improve our programs.

To those families who will be returning for the Summer and/or Fall A.R.T.S. programs, we have already begun to plan for another year of exciting learning experiences for the preschoolers.

To everyone, have a safe, relaxing and fun-filled summer. Thanks again for a great school year.

~ Stephanie

Obrigado! *Gracias!*

The Academy Faculty & Staff wants to thank the PTO for all the hard work and support this year.

Hvala! *Merci!* *Bedankt!*

IMPORTANT DATES TO REMEMBER

Last Days of School

May 20, 21: A.R.T.S. Recognition Days "Graduation" Ceremonies at 9:30 am and 1:30 PM (Dismissal at approximately 10:15 am and 2:15 PM)

May 26-June 12: Ballet Recital Rehearsals Schedule available in the office for Upstairs A.R.T.S. Tues./Thurs. recital participants

June 13: 1:00 PM & 5:00 PM ~ Academy's Annual Ballet Recitals in the Main Auditorium, Oak Park and River Forest High School

June 15-July 31: Summer Session

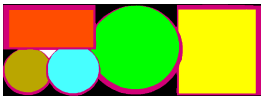
Spring Cleaning

Spring has finally arrived and many of you may find yourself taking on the task of spring-cleaning. We in the A.R.T.S. program (both upstairs and downstairs) have a small request to make. If in your sorting and selecting of what may stay and what must go – *PLEASE* consider donating any usable children's toys, puzzles, or books to our program. Many children use our materials all week so there is much wear and tear as well as broken or missing parts that occur over the school year. Our supply of Legos, Duplos, Lincoln logs, Brio trains, Wooden Blocks, Waffle Blocks, and Brio Mec can always use additional pieces. Our Brio Trains and track are especially in need of replacement pieces. If you do have any items you would like to donate, please bring them to the office or directly to Niki or Donna.

Thank you!

Any child who has a summer birthday is more than welcome to celebrate his or her birthday at school during the month of May. If you would like to do so, please let either Donna or Niki know of your intentions.

May in Downstairs A.R.T.S.



As our calendar turns to the month of May, the Downstairs A.R.T.S. children continue to explore the world of "Shapes and Senses." We have drawn, painted, decorated and constructed circles, ovals, squares and triangles. We have put our eyes, hands, ears and noses to work as we learned about our senses. The first week of May finds us busy using rectangles in our art, our songs, and our movement. There is sure to be a lot of discussion about our tongues and their job of tasting so many things.

The next two weeks in May are our last two weeks of school. We are calling this unit "Odds and Ends" as it gives us time to work on all sorts of odds and ends as well as get ready for our mini presentations on our Recognition Days. As usual, we will be moving, reading, building, singing and working all the way till our school year comes to an end. Have a terrific summer!

~ Niki Merrick

Downstairs A.R.T.S. Thank You to:

Ian MacKinnon for the Wooden Farm Cube Puzzle in honor of his 3rd birthday. The children have already been working hard on this challenging puzzle. Happy Birthday #3, Ian!

Katherine Johnston for the book Little Quack's Bedtime in honor of her third birthday. Little Quack is a favorite and this new adventure is sure to be read again and again. Happy 3rd Birthday, Katherine!

Wesley Scott for the Activity Clock in celebration of his half birthday. What a fun way to learn to tell time. Have fun being 4 ½, Wesley!

Calvin Gearhart for the Alphabet Animals book in honor of his third birthday. The pictures are terrific and everyone is sure to enjoy the slide and peek pages. Happy Birthday #3, Calvin!

Emmett Kindler for the book in the garden in celebration of his 4th birthday. It's a super book about growing things and on recycled paper. What a perfect Earth Day Birthday book choice. Happy 4th Birthday, Emmett!

Celeste Flosman for The Peace Book and the Look, See, Read Activity Box in honor of her third birthday. These are both great additions to our Academy shelves. Thank you for thinking of your preschool friends. Happy Birthday #3, Celeste!

Special Thank You to:

All our parents, grandparents and sitters who have come in and read to us. The children have really enjoyed having you as part of our day!

Following is the recipe for Playdough we make in Downstairs A.R.T.S. for the children:

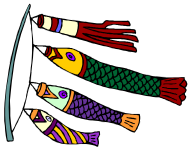
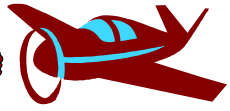
Maribeth's Playdough Recipe

It is super easy and will last for months in a Ziploc bag in your refrigerator.

2 cups flour
2 cups water
2 Tbs. cooking oil
2 tsp. cream of tartar
1 cup salt
food coloring as desired

Mix dry ingredients. Add oil and water with food coloring, mix in. (You will need many drops of food coloring to produce a strong color.) Cook over medium heat, stirring constantly until it reaches the consistency of stiff mashed potatoes. Remove from heat. Divide into 4 balls. Knead to work out any lumps. Provide a rolling pin, cookie cutters, and an eager preschooler for hours of fun!

May in Upstairs A.R.T.S.

In May, Upstairs A.R.T.S. students will complete their study of the four elements – Earth, Fire, Water and Air. We will visit New Mexico for the International Hot Air Balloon Fiesta. We will also visit many countries for their Kite Flying Contests. Through folktales, the children will investigate the Chinook Wind and the Monsoon Wind. In Science, we will explore the different aspects of air. Our curiosity will also lead us to research airplanes, rockets and helicopters.

The Monday/Wednesday children will be able to bring a story for us to act out during our Literature Class. An information sheet has been sent home. If you did not receive one, please ask Donna for another sheet.

There will be no "Sharing Time" this month.

And, of course, we will be remembering our Moms or Grandmas with our surprises! Watch for a special card in the mail after our trip to the Post Office.

We look forward to seeing you at our Recognition Days Performances completing our last theme "The Wind".

~ Donna Pries

Jumping Goal is Achieved!

In Larry's Physical Fitness class another challenge has been achieved. ***Caitlin Quinn*** jumped rope 57 consecutive jumps.

Upstairs A.R.T.S. Thank You to:

Frankie Krystal for the Rhyming Sounds Listening Lotto in celebration of her 5th birthday. This activity has already become a popular way to explore our rhyming sounds.

Hailey Nowak for the Spring Season Puzzle to honor her 5th birthday. What a perfect puzzle for this time of the year.

Mason Schmitz for the book Feathers and Fools in celebration of his 5th birthday. Through the story of the peacocks' and swans' fear of each other ending with their baby birds becoming friends, children could learn about getting along with others.

Special Thank You to:

All the Upstairs parents who have helped us in our classroom as a substitute, reader and baking treats.

Class Portrait Orders

A.R.T.S. school photo orders are being delivered next week. All of the photos are also posted on-line. If you would like to order additional photos, please send an e-mail to ***info@sgreenphoto.com***, and we will send you a link to view and order on-line. We really enjoyed photographing your children!

~ Stephen Green Photography

Summer fun ideas!

Most parents' reactions to the idea of summer vacation stretching before them fall into one of two categories. Either you're looking forward to the break in your routine, welcoming the time to take "family field trips" to enrich your child's experiential background or you are experiencing a growing sense of panic over how to fill the long, hot days that lie ahead.

Whichever category you may fall into, here are some tried and true (and hopefully new!) ideas for summer fun from A.R.T.S. parents and staff. Each is an easy day trip from the OPRF area.

BEMIS WOODS FOREST PRESERVE
West side of Wolf Rd. between Cermak Rd. and Ogden Ave., Western Springs
Several walking trails (trail map is at far end of parking lot.) A favorite leads to the toboggan slides, which are quite impressive to see. Plenty of places for a picnic lunch.

BLACKBERRY FARMS PIONEER VILLAGE
Galena Blvd. & Barnes Rd.
Aurora (630) 892-1550
A nice blend of hands-on activities and museum-like exhibits, including pony, carousel, and train rides. Bring a picnic – the grounds are lovely!

CHICAGO BOTANIC GARDEN
www.chicagobotanic.org
Eden Expressway and Lake Cook Road
Glencoe (847) 835-5440
Nice walking and bike trails, many breathtaking gardens and a great cafeteria.

CHOO-CHOO RESTAURANT
600 Lee Street
Des Plaines (847) 298-5949
Mon. – Fri.: 10:30 am – 8:00 PM, Sat.: 7:00 am –3:00 PM
Take a trackside seat and have your PB&J delivered by a model train. Plus it's just a few blocks from the McDonald's Museum.

DONLEY'S WILD WEST TOWN
Route 20 & South Union Road
Union, IL (815) 923-9000
(40 miles from O'Hare Airport in McHenry County)
Experience life in the Wild West: gunslinger showdowns, train rides, cowboy roping lessons, pop gun gallery, gold panning, canoe rides, petting zoo, and much more.

(Over for more ideas!)

FERRERA PAN CANDY COMPANY
7301 W. Harrison
Forest Park (708) 366-0500
Visit the old fashioned, quaint candy store, decorated with fun wall murals. You can purchase candy at old-fashioned prices - .10 & .25.

GARFIELD PARK CONSERVATORY
www.garfield-conservatory.org
300 N. Central Park – Green Line Stop
Chicago (773) 638-1766
Enjoy walking through the Conservatory and visit the Children's Garden. No admission charge – small donation appreciated.

THE GROVE
www.GlenviewParkDist.org
1421 Milwaukee Ave.
Glenview (847) 299-6096
This large nature preserve has everything: quiet hiking trails, a large bog, tee-pees, long house, log cabin, and a wonderful interactive center complete with huge floor-level turtle aquarium. Weekends offer special events with related crafts for kids. This is a favorite destination all year long. It is generally free – exceptions such as Octoberfest have a minimal charge.

LAMB'S FARM
www.lambsfarm.org
Rt. 17 and I-94
Libertyville (847) 362-4636
A very special place with farmyard, petting zoo, pony rides, restaurant, and ice cream parlor. Be sure to check out the pet shop! Run by developmentally disabled adults.

LITTLE RED SCHOOLHOUSE
Willow Springs (708) 839-6897
Nice, well-rounded nature center with three hiking trails and museum-like exhibits.

NAPERVILLE RIVERWALK
Downtown Naperville (630) 357-9000
Linear Park along DuPage River includes fountains, gazebos, playground, sand beach, paddle boats and fishing.

PIRATES' COVE THEME PARK
www.parks.elkgrove.org
999 Leicester Rd. & Biesterfield Rd.
(just south of the corner of Leicester & Biesterfield)
Elk Grove Village (847) 439-2683
Pirates' Cove for its fun rides (kids can go independently), age appropriateness, low-key atmosphere and lovely land-scaping. Also, the price is right – you only pay for the child that rides. A mini-amusement park for children ages 2- 10.

PLEASANT HOME
217 Home Ave.
Oak Park (708) 383-2654
National Historic Landmark home. One-hour tours Thurs.-Sun. Tours can be targeted to children. Special play-along games are part of the tour when children are present. The Historical Society has a historic toy room and a special vintage dress-up corner for kids of all ages. Adults - $5.00 Children 5-18 - $3.00 Under 5 are free. Friday is free for everyone.

RAINBOW FALLS WATER PARK
www.parks.elkgrove.org
Elk Grove Village (847) 228-2860
Children's adventure pool, slide area, wading pool, and zero-depth pool for babies. A special treat when Ridgeland and Rehm pools start to get a little bit ho-hum!

SHEDD AQUARIUM
www.sheddaquarium.org
1200 S. Lake Shore Dr. East
Chicago (312) 939-2435
Check out the "Tots on Tuesdays" for 3 to 5 year olds and the "Animal Encounters" programs.

WARREN DUNES STATE PARK
Lakeside, Michigan (616) 426-4013
A great destination for summer swimming, building sandcastles, walking in the woods, running down very high sand dunes, and getting far away for just one day!

WILLOWBROOK WILDLIFE HAVEN
Park Ave. and 22nd St.
Glen Ellyn (630) 942-6200
Wonderfully interactive nature center. Nice trails have signs to make your hike part of the learning experience.