

The Berkley Buzz

January 2009 Volume 27

Upcoming Events

December:

Close early on December 24th (4:00 pm)

Closed December 25 and 26

January 2009

Monday December 31, Close at 5:00

1/ 1, Closed for New Years Day

1/ 9, Closed for PDD

1/ 19, Closed for Martin Luther King Day

February 2008

**2/13 6th Annual Chris Cakes Pancake
Breakfast Held on PDD**

Something to Think About

**'I am enough of an artist to draw
freely upon my imagination.
Imagination is more important
than knowledge.
Knowledge is limited.
Imagination encircles the world.'**
(Albert Einstein)

**Wishing you a very
imaginative and prosperous
New Year!**

The Berkley Staff and Faculty

Program Enrichment Campaign

\$15,000 for 15 years

Total Raised as of December 1, 2008

\$4,295.00

Thank you to

The Hughes and LaCour Family
For your donation to Berkley's
Program Enrichment Campaign

A Note from Polly:

One of my most cherished books is The Measure of Our Success A Letter to My Children and Yours by Marian Wright Edelman. If you don't have a copy you might think about picking one up. It is an inspirational book that contains "24 life lessons". As I reflect on this year and what a joy it is to provide care and education for your children I think of "Lesson #6" "**Take parenting and family life seriously and insist that those you work for and who represent you do.**" How grateful I am to be a part of the Berkley community; a place where children are valued and families understand the importance of quality care and education. Berkley is truly a special place for children and the potential we have to impact our community regarding the value of our children's early childhood years is endless. **I, along with all our faculty and staff, receive such joy** from working with you and your children and as "Lesson #6" states; Berkley is a place where the care of your children is taken seriously.

We had a **marvelous time attending NAEYC in Dallas**. Thank you for helping us make this trip possible by being so understanding when we had to move our PDD dates around. If you have not had a chance to view our pictures you may view them on our website at <http://education.umkc.edu/Berkley/>. We also posted our handouts from our documentation and art studio presentation.

I am excited to share that, **with support from our program enrichment campaign**, Charlie Mylie, one of our intern's, from the Kansas City Art Institute, will start working at Berkley seven (7) hours a week starting in late January early February. Charlie's primary role is to support the teachers in tying the exploration of materials with project work. This is a new stage in our understanding of studio explorations and the process of intentionally introducing children to art media through open-ended, full bodied explorations.

In January we welcome UMKC early childhood practicum students into our classrooms. Both the infant toddler rooms and preschool classrooms will have practicum students completing their student teaching with the direction of our faculty. The students will be here for the entire semester starting the week of January 12, 2009.

The pancakes are coming early this year! Mark your calendars for Berkley's 6th annual Chris Cakes Pancake Breakfast on Friday, February 13, 2009. We had to move the date up this year due to Good Friday and Pass Over falling on April PDD.

Berkley Received a \$5,140 "Quality Improvement Mini-Grant" from the Family Conservancy. The grant supports our participation in the Early Childhood Excellence Project QRS – Quality Teaching for Quality Outcomes. The grant will pay for curriculum trainings with Project Construct, the purchase NAEYC accreditation self study materials, and NAEYC memberships.



Staff Spotlight – Katie Perkins

Please help us welcome Katie Perkins, Katie was one of our interns and she organized our entire library along with creating a library data base. Katie is now teaching in the Trolley room with Stephanie. Megan McPherson moved to the preschool department and is working in the Royal room.

Below are some tidbits about Katie we thought you would be interested in.

What is your previous experience and why did you choose this profession?

I have been around children all my life. My mom ran a family child care center from our home and I always found myself helping her out. In college I was a nanny for two boys for a year, and then I worked at the preschool at Cox Hospital. I've known all my life that working with children is what I want to do. Since I grew up with small children always around me, I can't imagine not having them with me now! I love being able to be there to make a positive impact on each child I meet.

What is your favorite thing about children?

There is never a dull moment. They can be so funny even when they don't mean to be.

What is your favorite children's book?

That's hard to narrow down. I love the Eric Carle books and Chicka Chicka Boom Boom.

If you could give advice to children what would it be?

Be yourself. Everyone has something unique and special about them and we should share it!

What is your favorite childhood memory?

Playing Barbie's with my sister and cousin; we would be down in our basement for hours setting up whole towns for them.

Share a favorite story about young children

Since I started at Berkley doing my internship in the library, the children mostly saw me in there. I worked in the Westport room in the afternoon. Once when I was outside with my

Westport friends, one of the Royal friends kindly told me, "You need to get back in the Berkley library!" I guess to them that was the only place I should be!

What are your hobbies?

Reading, cooking and anything that has to do with art.

Staff Spotlight – Loretta Bunn RETIRING

After almost fourteen (14) years we are saying good bye to our dear friend Loretta Bunn. Loretta is retiring January 1st along with her husband, a firefighter for over 20 years. They plan on spending time with their grandchildren and traveling to see family. Loretta has impacted the lives of so many children and families over the years. We will miss her very much and hope to have her visit us often.

Cherished Spaces

By Becky West, Classroom Instructional Specialist

Recently, I read an article on children's outdoor play spaces that made me stop and think for a moment and I wanted to share some of those thoughts with you. Of course there was the usual list of important considerations for playgrounds, but then the author, Rusty Keeler asked a show-stopping question, "Think about your childhood for a moment. What was your favorite outdoor place to play?" And quite suddenly I wasn't sitting in my favorite chair in the living room of my house. Suddenly, there were mountains of leaves crunching beneath my feet, their crisp fall smell hitting my nose in waves which alternated with the musty smell of old leaf covered earth as I kicked the leaves into ever bigger piles. The oaks of a small Ozarks glade formed the walls of the "play house" my sister and I had discovered early in the summer when we were supposed to be checking electric fence for my Dad. But Daddy obviously hadn't noticed this little gap between two rocky hillsides, through which a small stream danced and sparkled on sunny days. He didn't know that a fallen tree formed the stove and pantry of our playhouse, amply provisioned with the fall's bounty of acorns, walnuts, and hedge apples. The leaves were about to become the beds and blankets which would keep our corn cob dolls warm for the winter.

I could only have been there for seconds before the world came back and yet, something deep within me had been touched and refreshed by what seemed long, busy hours in that fleeting space. The smells were real, the crunch of the leaves sharp on my ears, the bark rough beneath my fingers...

So I invite you, "What was your favorite outdoor place to play?" And what will your child's memories be just a few short years from now?

Food Survey Results



A few months ago you received an electronic survey regarding the food offerings at Berkley. We received a great number of responses and your input has led to a number of changes. These changes are outlined below and have been made without any need to adjust tuition costs; essentially, they are a zero cost to parents.

One of the changes the greatest numbers of parents wished to see was the elimination of canned fruit and vegetables. We've determined that all canned vegetables and some of the canned fruit could be eliminated if we acquire additional freezer space. If you are one of the parents that would like to see this change made, here's your chance to help. If the proceeds from the cookie dough fundraiser are sufficient, Berkley FIP will consider funding all or part of the cost of a new upright freezer with cookie dough monies. We have one more week before cookie dough orders need to be turned in. **Please consider making that last sales push at the office this week, and ask all your relatives over the holiday weekend.** If selling cookie dough isn't your thing, please consider making a personal donation.

Food options already in place at Berkley:

- ☀ For the past year Berkley has been serving whole wheat bread and hamburger buns.
- ☀ A year ago Berkley eliminated heavy syrup and even light syrup from all canned fruit. All canned fruit is packaged in fruit juice (typically pear).

Food Changes:

- ☀ Berkley has made arrangements to purchase whole wheat pasta and will begin serving more pasta/protein lunch offerings. As a bonus, these lunches will replace some of the processed lunches currently offered, such as fish sticks. Vanessa is expanding her recipe repertoire, so if you have a favorite pasta dish you think would scale-up well, feel free to pass it along!

Food changes under evaluation:

- ☀ Due to the large number of respondents who would like to see organic milk served, Berkley evaluated this option and determined this change could not be made without impacting tuition costs, so this will be shelved for now.
- ☀ The cereals and crackers currently offered are being evaluated and compared to all of the cereal and crackers our supplier, Evco, offers. Crackers will be evaluated based on fiber content, presence/absence of hydrogenated oils or HFCS, and sugar content. Consumer Reports recently evaluated cereals based on fiber, sugar, sodium, iron and calcium contents. We'll do something similar and determine if any improvements can be made here.

Thanks again to everyone who took the time to participate in the survey! We'll keep you posted as we continue to evaluate the food offerings and implement improvements.

Berkley FIP

