

# The Berkley Buzz

June/July 09

Volume 29

## Upcoming Events

June 12 Closed for PDD:

On PDD the faculty is beginning a 10 month book study of **Moral classrooms, Moral Children *Creating a Constructivist Atmosphere in Early Education*** by Rheta DeVries and Betty Zan.

This book addresses the question of how to establish and maintain an interpersonal classroom atmosphere that fosters children's intellectual, social, moral, emotional, and personality development.

June 10, Berkley FIP Meeting 8:00 A.M.

July 3<sup>rd</sup> Berkley closed for in recognition of the 4th of July.

July 10<sup>th</sup> Berkley Closed for PDD

Watch for your classrooms to have transition meetings in July and or early August.

Thank you to Todd Mayfield for putting our new playground storage cabinet together. You rock!

**Look for these articles in this addition of the Berkley Buzz:**

**Spot Light on Jennifer Copeland**

**Spot Light on the Roo Room**

**Parking Lot Safety**

**Recognition and congratulations to staff**



## **A Note from Polly:**

Hurray for summer! This time of year is so much fun at Berkley! Sun glasses and hats are everywhere and as you walk through our hallways you smell sun screen and hear lots of laughter. Children take walks to the gardens; we play in the Rockhurst fountains and listen to stories from the children about how they will “stomp on the water when it comes through the holes”.

**Summer** is an especially exciting time for our Roo and Trolley friends. They are preparing for preschool in the fall! All of the classrooms will be contacting you **regarding transition meetings**. We know that a change in schedules can be stressful as well as exciting. Our goal is to make our transitions as smooth as possible. Please communicate any questions or concerns about our upcoming transitions with your child's teacher and let us know if there is anything we can do to make these changes easy for you too.

This is also the time of year we have to **say good bye to so many of our preschoolers who are moving on to Kindergarten**. While we are so excited for their new adventures it is heart breaking to see them go. If you notice some of us sniffing with teary eyes you can be sure it was one of our Berkley children's last days.

**Thank you** to all of the families who completed our **family survey**. Your feedback is so important to the quality of our program. We appreciate all of your kind words. One statement that came up a couple of times in the survey was about general emails to families. While it is great to get lots of information it seems we need a better strategy so that our families are not overwhelmed with emails on a daily basis. Please know we are working on this and your continued feedback and suggestions are welcomed.

**Did you see our new playground equipment and furniture!** We created a new language literacy/dramatic play area on the playground. The children love it. We have a set of willow furniture and two cedar benches. The children take books outside to read and get deeply involved in dramatic play. Playing “baby” and “hospital” are some of the favorite dramas and last Friday a few Plaza friends asked me to play grandma. Oh the joys of working with preschoolers. Another favorite thing the children do is to stretch out on the cedar benches and peacefully watch the clouds float in the sky or watch the sun prisms bounce off the wall of our storage shed. If you have not had a chance to stop by the playground please do. The sitting area is great for adults as well and you never know what type of dramatic play you might find yourself invited into. We also have a new cedar balance beam and storage cabinet. All of these items were purchased with a playground grant. We have one more major project and that is to add a patio around the deck.

**Yours for Children,**

**Polly**



## Staff Spot Light

**Jennifer Copeland** –Assistant Clinical Instructor  
Westport Room (*Married name is Luce*)

Why did you choose the early childhood profession?

I have always loved being around children. I find watching their growth and development fascinating. I'm thrilled to be a part of children's daily lives.

Who is your favorite author/book?

My favorite author is Alice Munro. She is a Canadian short story writer. My favorite book ever is probably *To Kill a Mockingbird* or *The Unbearable Lightness of Being*.

If you could tell children and pass along one thing for them to remember, what would it be?

I hope that children would learn from me to treat those around them with kindness and respect. It's a basic way of thinking that goes a long way toward making the world a better place.

Tell your favorite story about child/children?

I just love the spontaneous and often hilarious things that children say. They are so filled with love it always brightens my day. My son Quinn asks me to marry him almost every day. I have given up telling him I'm already married. I hope he remembers he loves me that much when he's a teenager!

What are your hobbies?

I enjoy hiking and biking with my sons Miles and Quinn and my husband Mark. I enjoy reading, watching movies, and knitting. My favorite thing to do is go out to dinner with my husband because we so rarely have the opportunity!



## Parking Lot Safety at Berkley

With summer approaching and lots of outdoor activities it is a good time to remind ourselves of Berkley's safety procedures concerning our parking lot. The following guidelines are to emphasize how much we value your safety:

- When pulling into the driveway, please enter slowly with caution, looking both ways for children and families.
- Please use the designated crosswalks (to model safe street-crossing procedures for the children). There is a crosswalk near the entrance of Berkley, and another by the stop sign at the southwest corner of the playground.
- Always remember to walk on the sidewalks.
- When crossing the driveway from the parking lot remember to stop and look both ways before crossing.
- Please make sure to only enter the parking lot near Berkley's front door (following the one way sign).

Thank you for helping to keep the children safe.



## Classroom Spot Light

### What's happening in the Roo Room?

**By: Kristina Brown, Assistant Clinical Instructor**

As we near the transition to Preschool, we are focused more on integrating various elements of the transition into our daily schedule. We have already begun visiting the Westport and Plaza Rooms with the children and allowing them to explore the new spaces. The children freely venture into the different learning centers and manipulate the materials, all the while asking questions and pointing out items of interest. As teachers, we carefully coordinate the visits with times that the current classroom inhabitants are enjoying outdoor time, so that the Roo Friends can feel as comfortable as possible exploring a new environment with familiar friends and adults. We hope that by doing so, the children can establish an initial comfortable connection with their future classroom.

After our visits, the children are excited to talk about what they have seen and experienced so we encourage the children to tell each other about their visits during morning meeting. This special discussion time allows the teachers to ask provoking questions and model the act of conversation, which encourages language development and intentional interactions between the children. During and after many of our visits, we also incorporate a brief visit with the new teachers. The children really seem to have become increasingly comfortable with these interactions.

Elements of the transition have also been incorporated into our curriculum planning. Much of the recent classroom activity is planned using materials that the children have gravitated to in their new

classrooms. Most of the children have shown an interest in the writing centers in both the Westport and Plaza Rooms. Based on our observation of their interests, we gathered similar materials such as staplers (without staples), tape dispensers, safety scissors, pens, pencils, and an assortment of paper and envelopes. We provided them for exploration in the Roo Room and hope that by continuing to extend this process of discovery, we will help the children build many strong, comfortable connections to their new classrooms. We also hope to encourage excitement and anticipation in the children about the upcoming transition.



### Congratulations To:

Monica Houston, Administrative Assistant –  
Received her B.A. Psychology from Avila  
University, May 09

Megan McPherson, Assistant Clinical Instructor, –  
Received her B.A. in Education/Early childhood  
from UMKC, May 09

Sammy Bryant, Assistant Clinical Instructor –  
Received her B.S. in Accounting from Rockhurst  
University, May 09

Cindy Dover, Assistant Clinical Instructor –  
Finishes her required college credits in August 09.  
Is on the Deans honor roll at Penn Valley  
Community College AND received the Mid-  
America Association for the Education of Young  
Children's Spirit of Jay award at our annual  
meeting in May 09.