



Parker-Chase Newsletter

PCPO (Parker-Chase Parent Organization) News

Spring Book Fair:

Our Spring Book Fair will be held April 16-27. **Miss Eilene** (Upper Pre-school) will be coordinating this event again this year. We can always use parent volunteers to take a short shift and help out. Look for sign-up sheets on the front door.

Teacher Appreciation:

Teacher Appreciation Week will be in May. PCPO's Teacher Appreciation Committee have been busy putting ideas together for all of the teachers. There will be a different theme posted for each day of the week. We hope to provide our teachers with a spectacular week of appreciation and need your help to make the week a complete success. Watch the PCPO Bulletin Board and for emails about opportuni-



ties to participate!

Fundraisers:

Mixed Bag Designs—We launched a new fundraiser this year—Mixed Bag Designs—and the results were outstanding! We raised over \$1,000 for our Teacher Appreciation Fund.

Spring Flower Fundraiser—Thank you to all of our families who participated in the Spring Flower Fundraiser by purchasing all of the brightly colored begonias, impatiens and moss roses! In addition to beautifying our homes and neighborhoods, we added funds to the Christmas in July Fund. We even had parents donate flowers for the flower bed around the flag pole. The children will help plant and care for those flowers

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April, 2012

Mark Your Calendars

- ☺ April 2 & 3—Lifetouch Picture Days
- ☺ April 6—Close @ 3:00 for Good Friday
- ☺ April 6—No school for Plano and Frisco ISD
- ☺ April 6—Passover Begins at Sundown
- ☺ April 7—Ms. Shayla's (Toddler 2) Wedding♥♥
- ☺ April 8—Easter
- ☺ April 9-13—Frisco ISD Kindergarten Round-Up
- ☺ April 12—5:30-6:30 PCPO in Kiva—EVERYONE WELCOME
- ☺ April 16-27—Scholastic Book Fair
- ☺ April 22—Earth Day
- ☺ April 23-27—Week of the Young Child
- ☺ April 24—Ms. Gail Birthday (Kitchen)
- ☺ April 27—Spring Flower Pick-Up
- ☺ April 30—Frisco ISD No School

Celebrate Week of the Young Child April 23-27



The month of April brings a very special celebration in the field of early childhood education, the *Week of the Young Child*™. The *Week of the Young Child*™ is an annual celebration sponsored by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC). The purpose of the week is to focus public attention on the needs of

young children and their families and to recognize the early childhood programs and teachers who meet those needs. The 2012 *Week of the Young Child*™ is April 23-27 and the theme is **Early Years are Learning Years**®. Today we know more than ever before about the importance of children's earliest years in shaping their learning and development. Yet, never before have the needs of young children and their families been more pressing. The *Week of the Young Child*™ is a time to recognize that children's opportunities

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Celebrate Week of the Young Child

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are our responsibilities, and to recommit ourselves to ensuring that each and every child experiences the type of early environment—at home, at child care, at school, and in the community—that will promote their early learning. It is a



week for us to plan how we--as citizens of a community, of a state, and of a nation--will better meet the needs of all young children and their families. Along with local and national special events, we have planned some delightful activities to reflect the wonder of early childhood. Our scheduled events are:

On Monday...Prevent the Achievement Gap—Books Open Doors!

Each classroom will choose a favorite book and have the children decorate the classroom door as a giant book cover. We'll have a family book swap for Parker-Chase. Donate new or used books that you have at home that your child may have outgrown or do not use. Everyone wear his or her pajamas to school this day. Nothing makes you feel as relaxed as your favorite PJ's. During the week parents will read aloud to their child as many times as possible and bring in a reading log to receive stickers.

On Tuesday...Kids Can Change the World—One Pair at a Time!

WE NEED YOU TO CLEAN OUT YOUR CLOSETS!!! Estimates are that every person has at least 3 or 4 pairs of shoes in their closet that are not worn any more but are still in good shape. We ask that not only you clean out your closets, but convince your friends, neighbors and relatives

to do the same. The shoes can have no holes in the soles and must be in decent shape. All footwear including sandals and boots are accepted and needed. PLEASE TIE SHOES TOGETHER OR USE ELASTIC BANDS TO HOLD SHOES IN PAIRS. It is also the GREEN thing to do. There are tons of discarded footwear in the landfills that--when they break down--the toxic glue that holds our shoes together can leak into our water supply and atmosphere. Your donated shoes will go to Soles4Souls™. Soles4Souls™ is a Nashville-based charity that collects shoes from the warehouses of footwear companies and the closets of people like you. The charity distributes these shoes to people in need, regardless of race, religion, class, or any other criteria. Since 2005, Soles4Souls™ has delivered over 17 million pairs of new and gently worn shoes to people in over 127 countries, including Kenya, Thailand, Nepal and the United States.

On Wednesday...Embracing Diversity—Traveling Around the World!

Children and teachers will celebrate each child's and each teacher's heritage. Please help your child plan a fun "Show-and-Tell" to share with his/her classmates that teaches us about your family's traditions and

cultures. It can be cultural toys, pictures, family traditions, learn a new word(s) from your native language and even cook a favorite dish that may be common to your family. (If you can't be here to prepare it, teach us how, and we will share it with the children in your child's class-

room.) Wear traditional clothing from your country. It's fun to learn more about each family at Parker-Chase!

On Thursday...Strengthening Families—Tag, You're It!!

Each child will take home a piece of white card stock preprinted with questions about how your child is special to you. Please complete the questions and return them to us. We're going to have the children illustrate the paper and hang each and every one of them around the Kiva and the school. Celebrate each child's uniqueness every day at Parker-Chase!!

On Friday...Play—Where Learning Begins: Outside School and Picnic!

We'll enjoy the beautiful spring weather with a day of outside learning. We'll take activities, relays, blocks, painting OUTSIDE! We'll have lunch and snack picnic-style on the playgrounds. Each class will come up with some interesting bubble wand inventions and share them together on the playground for our "Bubble-Blow-Out." We'll go outside for book-nics—sit on blankets and read.

Let's all have fun in promoting the joys of childhood! Be sure and get involved—PARTICIPATE! ♥

Creating a Caring Community

The first role defined for teachers of young children in the position statement of the National Association for the Education of Young Children is "to create a caring community of learners." This phrase popped into my mind recently as I contemplated the news story about the father who shot his daughter's computer because of her (rudely and publicly expressed) complaints about doing her assigned household chores.

When I think of words to describe a family, "a caring community" gives a nice image--people of different ages who live communally, bound by love and caring. My understanding of community is that we are all in this together, with each of us deriving benefit from the group, as well as making appropriate contributions.

When a child complains bitterly about having to do household chores, it seems that she has failed to gain this understanding, since members of a community understand their responsibilities that are lovingly undertaken to help one another.

Why would this happen? Sometimes parents feel that the definition of their role is to do all the care and maintenance of their children, that this is what a "good" parent would do. They may underestimate what even very young children can do to help around the house, and decide to postpone such training for later, at which point children may have become habituated to being the privileged drones in the household. Or parents may discover that it is faster and more effective for them to do small tasks themselves, not realizing what intangible benefits children derive from making contributions that

they perceive as meaningful. Possibly parents are so busy that they do not want to take the time to demonstrate the "how to's" so that children can take responsibility for household chores. And, in the most telling lack of all, there is no communication about the concept of family as community, with parents helping their children understand that when people love each other, daily life is a series of accommodations and compromises.

When the conversation deteriorates to bickering over whose job it is, this bigger idea of community is absent. Parents modeling cooperation offer a huge lesson here. Whatever the reason, important life-lessons are lost when children are not included as contributing members of the family community. Let me list some of these life-lessons:

1. Everyone has a job to do, and taking responsibility for doing it well is important for the good of everybody.

2. Sometimes we have to do things just because they need to be done, not because they

are particularly enjoyable (although show me a two- or three-year-old who does not get a kick out of wielding a broom or emptying a waste basket!).

3. There is a feeling of satisfaction in fulfilling a responsibility.

4. Often we get the job done first, and then have time for relaxation and pleasure.

Individuals who have learned these lessons are most likely to succeed in school and later life, in relationships and their chosen work life. Beginning early with household tasks and creating a sense of community is the first step to these helpful attitudes. ♥



News

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throughout the summer. Thank you for all of your support! Mark your calendars...don't forget to pick your flowers up on **Friday, April 27th**.

Annual Spring Picnic:

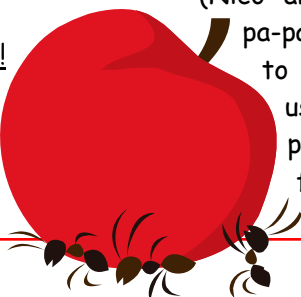
Don't Miss the Spring Picnic! Come out and enjoy a Spring evening with other Parker-Chase families at the annual Spring Picnic. The Pavilion at

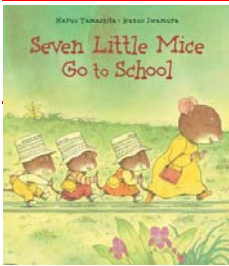
Russell Creek Park has been re-watched for them. Dust off those tri-cycles, bicycles and rollerblades and polish up those kite-flying skills and be ready for a fun evening with other Parker-Chase families and teachers!

Again this year, one of the grandfathers of our alumni, **Phil Mondello** (Nico and Cruz Cabutto's pa-pa) has volunteered to cook hotdogs for us. We'll send out pre-order forms for dinner--so

Mark Your Calendar:

The Next PCPO Meeting will be Thursday, April 12th at 5:30 pm in the Kiva. Everyone is invited! We hope to see you there!! ♥





The Reading Chair

***Seven Little Mice Go to School.* by Haruo Yamashita. Illus. by Kazuo Iwamura. Ages 3 to 6.**

Thirty years since its publication in Japan, this new English translation of *Seven Little Mice* is a success (a 1999 French edition, *Le train des souris*, is also available). The book opens with the mice. "They are septuplets, which is like twins only there are seven," Yamashita writes. (He could not have guessed in 1981 that multiple births would be so relatable to children today, a convenient coincidence.) No matter how nicely their mother prepares them for their first day of school, with new hats fashioned from bottle caps and book bags made from cocoon silk, they have trouble getting to sleep the night before. They worry about bullies. They worry about the long walk through the forest during which they may bump into a snake or get cold. And how will their mother corral them all in the morning?

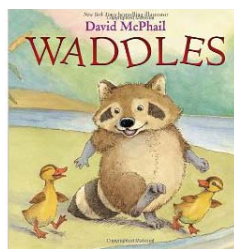
While the mice are slumbering, using humor and imagination, their mother unrolls two large balls of yarn to form parallel train tracks running through the forest. When it's time to set out for school, she acts as a train conductor and calls her children to climb aboard by lining up single file behind her on the tracks. What child could resist that? Soon, their train of eight grows to include many neighbors, too. When the humongous locomotive bumps into a large snake—the encounter happens in a dramatic fashion in a dark tunnel on a double gate-fold spread—the snake slithers away in fear.

It's one of the best books in recent memory about going off to school.

***Waddles,* by David McPhail. Ages 3 to 7.**

Waddles enjoys a lovely raccoon life, finding meals in trash cans in the park and watching the seasons change. It only gets better when he befriends a duck named Emily. They swim together, and Emily offers to share her supply of bugs. Waddles declines; he prefers half-eaten sandwiches from the trash.

Waddles keeps Emily's eggs warm with his fluffy coat, and he even protects them from a hungry fox. When the ducklings hatch, Waddles becomes a wonderful uncle-like figure. With these new friends in his life, he's happier than ever. But when Emily and her brood



depart for the winter, Waddles feels hopelessly lonely. Winter is not the same as it was before Emily came into his life. Thankfully, it's not long before he spots the first sign of spring, followed shortly by a reunion with his friends.

In this story of friendship, McPhail combines facts of the natural world with a heavy dose of fiction, and the balance works nicely. He paces the story—and adds a layer of science at the same time—by announcing each season as it arrives. The pen, ink, and watercolor illustrations are warm and full of expressive detail.

Waddles is a character readers root for. His tenderness is endearing, his loneliness stirs empathy, and when he fights the fox with conviction, his loyalty to Emily and her eggs is inspiring.

***Rah, Rah, Radishes! A Vegetable Chant,* by April Pulley Sayer. Ages 3 to 8.**

Sayer has drawn inspiration from the bounty of her local farmers' market in creating this chant that celebrates healthy eating: "Rah, rah, radishes!/Red and white./Carrots are calling./Take a bite!/Oh boy, bok choy!/Brussels sprout./Broccoli. Cauliflower./Shout it out!"

Photographs of abundant, fresh-picked produce are mouthwatering, the variety mesmerizing, and Sayer's language a treat on every page: "Eggplant's extraordinary./Pumpkin's art./Don't eat zucchini?/Time to start!" The rhyme never feels forced. Ear-pleasing alliteration abounds, and readers might just start moving to the rhythm of the text. Children will likely encounter vegetables they've never heard of, in forms they've never seen (the green heads of the brussels sprout plant are still on the stalk).

Rah, Rah, Radishes! Supports multiculturalism (bok choy and peppers in varieties of cayenne, poblano, habanero, and serrano) and mathematics (sorting and grouping of related varieties). The book also fosters a connection with the source of our food by ending with an appreciative nod: "Thank you, farmers./Thank you, bees./Sun and seasons, leaf and stalk./Know them, Grow them!/Veggies rock!" "A Few More Bites," the section at the end of the book, offers more information about vegetables, whether tomatoes are a fruit, and putting color on your dinner plate. ♥

