



**Montgomery
Child Care
Association**

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Park Street Children's Center Post

November – December 2009

Director's Thoughts

We seem to be surviving flu season here at Park Street without too many ill effects. I have heard of many of you who have had your children vaccinated for both the H1N1 flu and for the regular flu, and perhaps had yourselves immunized as well. Hand-washing continues to be stressed for teachers, children, and parents as well as a regular washing of the toys, particularly in the infant/toddler rooms for obvious reasons. We are tracking every case of H1N1 and also ILI (Influenza-Like Illness) in the office at the request of the Health Department, so please remember to call our office when your child is staying home and let us know why.

Did you attend the fifth annual MCCA 5K on November 7th? It was very cold to start with, as always, but everyone who came enjoyed themselves, including office staff and teachers from Park Street. Money raised will be used for the Family Emergency Fund. The center with the most registrations wins a free lunch for the staff, and with 35 we could have won, but it is calculated on a percentage basis so the honors go to MCC Bethesda-Lynbrook.

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Please Designate Montgomery Child Care



#13880



#8447

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Christina Giovinazzo, Executive Director

MCCA-Colombo 5K Wrap-up

Many thanks to all the volunteers, sponsors and families who participated in our 5th Annual MCCA-Colombo 5K Race, ½ Mile, and Wacky Fun Run on November 7th.

Over 200 people enjoyed the kids' activities, great door prizes, beautiful weather, and of course, the races. In the 5K race, our youngest runner was 6 years old, the oldest was 74, and times

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Director's Thoughts

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At the recent Parent Council meeting, we discussed Jacky Howell's workshop on "Positive Discipline for Parents" which was held here at Park Street on October 20th. Those parents who attended found it very useful and entertaining, and the subject they chose for Jacky's Spring workshop is more about the same "hot topic" plus information on learning styles. Look for more information in March.

Speaking of the Parent Council, whose next meeting will be December 2nd from 6:00 – 7:00 p.m., one annual project is asking for donations from parents for the Staff Holiday Fund. Last year, just over \$4,000 was donated and was divided evenly among all the staff, plus the two staff at our off-site center MCC St. Mary's. This year, two separate letters will go out from the Parent Council drafted by personnel representative Debby Landau, one to Park Street parents and one to St. Mary parents. Money raised will again be turned into Target gift cards, to be presented to the staff at our annual holiday lunch on December 16th. On that date, parents provide both the food and the child care from 1:00 – 3:00 p.m., so all staff can be together. An envelope for contributions will go up by the office after Thanksgiving, and will stay up until December 11th. Donations should be made by cash or check (made out to MCCA and with "Holiday Gift Fund" written in the memo line on your check). Please watch for the food and child care sign-up sheet that will be up in early December.

On November 12th and 13th, Teddy Bear Studios returned for the fifth year to take photographs of the children. This is one of our few fundraisers, since we receive a percentage of total sales. Viewing dates will be November 30th for parents of children in the younger classes, and December 2nd for parents of children in the older classes. Plan to come early if possible, since these sessions get very crowded. I hope you are happy with the results. We have the all-center photographs for the past five years on the windowsill near the office, and the children and their older siblings/Park Street alumni love to look at themselves as they used to be.

We will soon be in the grip of winter weather, and MCCA now has an association-wide winter weather policy to allow for every eventuality. There is a copy on the website (www.mccaedu.org), and a copy posted on the parent board by the office. Hard copies will be distributed soon, so please continue to check and empty your child's mailbox. If ever you're in doubt concerning a certain day, you can call our office and hear if there are any changes to our usual routine. I try to record any changes as soon as I hear them and aim for 5:00 a.m.

This newsletter focuses on holiday traditions. Each family has its own, and we would love to hear about yours, so please consider coming into your child's class to share books, stories, food, crafts, dress or anything else that you'd like the children to know about.

Enjoy the peace and joy of the season that the holidays can bring!

Helen Henderson

MCC Park Street Director

Park Street Calendar Reminders:

November 26 – 27, 2009 December 24 – 25, 2009 December 28, 2009 January 1, 2010	Park Street closed.
December 31, 2009	Park Street closes at 3:00 p.m.

Christina Giovinazzo, Executive Director

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ranged from a blazing 16 minutes 48 seconds to well over half an hour. The Wacky Fun Run was presented by Jump Bunch this year, and the ½ Mile was a new event, aimed at giving the older kids a more challenging “grown-up” race experience.

Our 5K event raised over \$7,000 for our Family Emergency Scholarship Fund, providing temporary tuition assistance to MCCA families who experience a job loss, serious illness, or other crisis that makes them unable to afford their child care. A big thank-you to our generous race sponsors:

- **COLUMBO BANK**, Platinum Sponsor
- **RMC: Residential Mortgage Center**, Gold Sponsor
- **Allstate – Sandi Poole**, Silver Sponsor
- **A Smarter Divorce**, Silver Sponsor
- **Brooklyn’s Deli & Catering**, Bronze Sponsor
- **Dubner & Megginson Families**, Bronze Sponsor
- **DrinkMore Water**, Bronze Sponsor
- **Express Title**, Bronze Sponsor
- **Good Food**, Bronze Sponsor
- **Great Wolf Resorts**, Bronze Sponsor
- **MasterGraphic PrintCo**, Bronze Sponsor
- **Ruppert Landscape**, Bronze Sponsor
- and **GEICO**, for a donation directly to the fund.

Thanks again to everyone who supported the race. Happy Thanksgiving, Happy Holidays, and may 2010 be a great year for everyone.

-Chris

Happy Thanksgiving,
Happy Holidays
In these difficult times, we still find much to be
thankful for, including the children and families we
serve, and our dedicated child care staff.
Wishing you all a happy, healthy, and prosperous
New Year.

MCCA Meetings:

Thursday, November 19th	6:30 p.m. at the MCCA Office – MCCA Finance Committee Meeting
Tuesday, November 24th	7:00 p.m. at the MCCA Office – MCCA Board of Directors Meeting

Association Events:

Tuesday, November 17th	5:00 p.m. to closing – MCCA Family Night Out at Hard Times Café – Bethesda, 4920 Del Ray Ave., Bethesda 20814 (Parking garage right across the street) Benefitting our Staff Scholarship Fund
Thursday & Friday, November 26 – 27	MCCA Centers closed for Thanksgiving holiday
Thursday through Monday, December 24 - 28	MCCA Centers closed for Christmas holiday
Thursday, 3 p.m., December 31	MCCA Centers close at 3 p.m. – please drive safely
Friday, January 1, 2010 New Year’s Day	MCCA Centers closed. Happy New Year!

A Note From MCC St. Mary's

Mary Buckeridge, Site Director
Montgomery Child Care Association

We're back for a brand-new year at MCC St. Mary's. Summer was a whirlwind of fun and adventure that seemed to go by much too quickly. Several kids from MCC St. Mary's spent summer over at Park Street. They participated in swimming, fun activities, wet and messy water days, and exciting field trips. Summer memories fade as the cool and crisp temperatures usher in the upcoming holiday season. For Halloween, we made paper chains, spooky ghosts, wrote ghost stories, and decorated cookies for a sweet treat. We are also planning a project for parents to write or come in to share their family holiday traditions with the class. We hope to hear many fun and wonderful stories.

A few months into the start of school and we have already had several ½ and full days at MCC St. Mary's! We have a lot of fun every day but take the opportunity on the days with more hours to do extra-special activities. The kids made gak, oobleck, and play-dough which are all science / sensory materials for the children to experience. We had a "Teddy Bear" tea party where the children made their own cookies and real tea. Sandwich wraps, and our own version of egg "McMuffins" were a big hit, and we made creatures out of the walnuts we collected from outside (when they weren't falling on our heads). One activity we are working on now is creating structures from stacking drinking cups. This takes planning, fine motor skills, flexible thinking, cooperation, and creativity (all skills and goals that school-age kids are working on and trying to master). Some structures reached over our heads. A future project is to make some drums for the classroom. Donations of canister-type cans or boxes with lids would be greatly appreciated.

About MCCA:

Montgomery Child Care Association (MCCA) is an association of 9 centers at 15 locations, and Park Street Children's Center is part of this network!

MCCA Mission Statement

Montgomery Child Care Association strives to provide: the highest quality child care and play-based education for children in Montgomery County; professional training for child care providers; advocacy for affordable quality child care for families of all income levels, and better training, pay, and benefits for child care professionals. MCCA is a United Way agency #8447, Combined Federal Campaign agency #13880, and a 501(c)(3) nonprofit charity.

An Interview With Doris Rodriguez

Q. When did you start working at Park Street?

A. In November 2004. I had worked at MCC Bel Pre from 2000 – 2002, but left to have my daughter, Emily.

Q. What keeps you working for MCCA?

A. I like MCCA and I like working with kids.

Q. What is it about Park Street that keeps you working here?

A. I love it here and would not feel comfortable anywhere else.

Infants and Toddlers Program

Caterpillars:

The fall/winter seasons are upon us, and approaching fast. Our Caterpillars and their teachers are preparing for the fun to come. One of our favorite activities during these festive times is taking pictures of our friends in their costumes and listening to songs and stories about the different holidays and celebrations to come. We enjoy turning on special lights that our Caterpillars love to gaze at. Another favorite activity is to stroll around the neighborhood and look at all the changes in the foliage and the pretty decorations

we see. As the seasons change, so do our Caterpillars. **Samantha** is now sitting un-attended and loves to roll around on the floor mats. **Sarah** loves to laugh and coo as she pulls herself up to a standing position. **Lena** is busy doing "tummy time" and having great fun at it. She also loves to play under the cloth gym, batting at the toys above her. **Lilliana** is doing well. She also enjoys playtime and taking stroller rides. **Daniel** is sitting up and playing happily. He loves reaching out for toys and is very pleased when he succeeds. We would also like to welcome our

newest Caterpillar, **Justyce Joppy**. She is a cutie! All our Caterpillars enjoy anything that makes sounds or music, which is a large part of our classroom environment, especially during this time of the year. Happy holidays and winter season to all!



Busy Bees:

Once again it's time to celebrate all our holidays and enjoy the season. Some favorite activities are listening to holiday music and reading books about the seasons and holidays. We will sing songs like Jingle Bells, Frosty the Snowman, Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer, and many others just to get our Busy Bees "in the groove". We love all the different celebrations, traditions, and foods that come with this time of the year. Painting gingerbread

men and snowflakes is always fun. We love to watch for the snowfalls to come. Playing in the snow and making snowmen are always exciting activities. We like to bring snow indoors as well and use it for little science experiments, such as melting and coloring. Whenever there is snow falling outside our Busy Bees love to climb on the couch and watch it while making fun "squeaky" noises. We are all wishing for a white winter season and plenty of

fun!



Puppies:



The holidays are upon us. At this time of year we like to enjoy all the many celebrations that go on. Our Puppies really enjoy all the activities that occur this time of year and we teach them about respect and values of everyone's different beliefs and rituals. For Halloween, our Puppies decorated crowns that they later put on their heads, danced to music, and had their pictures taken. There is also artwork they like to do with paintbrushes using dark and light colors. For Thanksgiving, a favorite poem is "Mr. Turkey and Mr. Duck". The children are asked to repeat the

sounds made by the turkey and the duck. One of our favorite activities is to trace the children's hands onto paper and then have them color the fingers to look like turkey feathers. We like to display pumpkins in the room for the children to look at and to talk about textures, how big or little, and the colors they are. We also discuss how pumpkins are grown by seeds in the soil with water and sunlight. For the winter holidays, Christmas, Hanukkah, Kwanzaa and Eid are discussed, and stories are read to enhance the holiday spirits. We like to turn the classroom lights off and turn on colored lights above the

mattress while listening to holiday songs of the season. It is a time of thanks, togetherness, and giving. Our Puppies like to make finger-paintings, stamp or sponge-paintings on cards that are given as gifts to their parents. When the time presents itself, they love making snowmen and playing in the snow whenever they can. Another favorite activity is to dress up in multi-cultural costumes and dance to different musical tunes. Our parents are encouraged to share information about their holiday traditions and celebrations. We hope everyone has a great holiday and winter season!

Two's Program

Tadpoles:

The changing of the leaves and the season of crisp cool air is upon us. We would like to start out by welcoming **Abby Gleason** and **Hillel Tulchin** to our Tadpole classroom. We say a fond farewell to **Henry Leventhal** who has graduated to the Dinosaur classroom. Our Tadpoles almost missed our field trip to Spiknell's Farm since our bus driver, Susan, was sick, but then it was rescheduled. The kids really

enjoyed themselves and especially liked the animals. Thank you to the parents who participated. The holidays are fast approaching and fun is in the air. Our Tadpole classroom will be discussing how each of our friends celebrate different occasions, as well as people all over the world. We will enjoy singing festive songs and making special art projects to include in our activities. Our Tadpoles love going on nature walks to

collect pine cones, acorns, and leaves to add to our many items for projects. We hope everyone has a great winter season with all the fun activities and celebrations that go with it.



Little Feet:

Our Little Feet enjoy celebrating many different traditions. Some celebrate Halloween, and some don't. Typically most celebrate Thanksgiving as a time of being with their families and friends and enjoying yummy foods. Some eat the traditional turkey, pumpkin, and pecan pies, while others have their own traditional foods. Some of our Little Feet enjoy celebrating Christmas with all the traditions, includ-

ing Christmas trees, decorations, gifts, and of course, Santa Claus! Hanukkah is celebrated by others which includes decorations, gifts, lights, and the lighting of the Menorah candles as well as delicious foods. Then there are others who have their own traditional celebrations such as Kwanzaa, Devali, and Eid which are also enjoyed by all. Our Little Feet really enjoy this time of year with all the

festivities and fun. Also, at this time of year, all of our MCCA centers collect toys to be distributed by our local Fire Departments. Whatever your holiday traditions and celebrations are, this is a good time to share and enjoy each others' goodwill and good wishes. Have Fun!



STAFF RECOGNITION:

Happy Birthday to:

Nov. 15th - Claudia Nelson (Dino's class)

Dec. 29th - Alice-Maude Newstead (Puppies class)

Dec. 31st - Rani Khan (Caterpillars and Busy Bees classes)



Happy Anniversary to:

Nov. 1
Wendy Greene - 11 years

Nov. 16
Marie Cadenas (St. Mary's) - one year

Dec. 1
Alice-Maude Newstead - four years

Doris Rodriguez - five years

Mireille Mfuta - six years

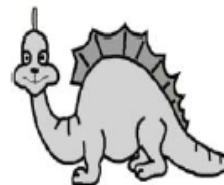


Preschool Program

Dinosaurs:

The Dinosaur class has some of its own traditions. Some are related to the holidays, but most are connected with what's happening in our environment. When the leaves began to change color and fall, we knew it was time to visit a farm for pumpkins and apples, to make a scarecrow, and to gather acorns. We cooked the pumpkin and toasted the seeds and even made pumpkin cake. Our Dinosaurs really love putting apples on the "apple machine"

that peels and cores. As we crack the acorns, we like to sing a traditional song called "I'm a Little Acorn Brown". Our other favorites are "Five Little Pumpkins" and "The Three Kittens Who Lost Their Mittens". As other holidays arrive, we plan to bring all the Dinosaur family traditions into the classroom through stories, cooking, and songs. We hope everyone has a great winter filled with many fun traditions and celebrations. Happy Holiday Season!



Fireflies:

This time of year is especially fun for holiday celebrations. The fun of Halloween is followed by the special time of Thanksgiving when family, friends, and great food all come together. Eid is also celebrated this way and enjoyed by all. Christmas, Hanukkah, and Kwanzaa are always looked forward to with stories, music and excitement. There are so many celebrations that we at Park Street look forward to. Our Fireflies enjoy talking

about all holidays and traditions. We discuss what they all mean and read stories to enlighten their knowledge about the differences. Our Fireflies like to ask questions and talk about what they do for their own holidays. We are lucky to live and work in a place where all traditions and holidays are able to be shared and celebrated. We are a multi-cultural center which allows us all to learn about different parts of the world, people, different traditions,

and cultures, and how much we are alike in many ways. Our Fireflies always welcome any parent who would like to share their traditions with our classroom. We really enjoy all the fun and excitement. We hope you do too. Happy Holidays!



Thank You !

- To the Jonah Ritter family for the donation of toys and books.
- To the Bella and Charlie Maust family for the donation of books.
- To our Park Street teacher, Rani Khan, for her donation of chairs.
- And, to Ingrid Ivins again, for her help with our newsletter.

Donation Request

Please check the wish list next to the office for new items needed in the classrooms.

School-Age Program

XTREME-KIDZ:

Our Xtreme Kidz are at the ages that they really enjoy any and all celebrations. This is an exciting time of year and we enjoy talking and reading about all traditions. We will be creating a new bulletin board entitled "Our World According to Us". It will have listed our Xtreme Kidz' favorite things, and holiday polls will be included. We just finished celebrating Halloween and had such a great time. There was plenty of participation by both the kids and parents. We received so many donations of goods for the celebration, and a huge thank-you goes out to

the families for their help. It was very much appreciated by our class. There were also quite a few projects with Halloween in mind that were thought of by our Xtreme Kidz. We even collaborated with the schools about jack-o-lantern designs and our class would then carve them. We like to talk about all holidays and how everyone celebrates at home. This is a great time of year for our families to share any of their holiday traditions or food items that are special for this time of year. If you would like to join in one of our circle times and share with our class, please

let us know. You'd be more than welcome. The Fireflies' class loaned us a few books on Ramadan when it was being observed a few months ago. Our Xtreme Kidz were extremely interested and enjoyed learning about another culture. We are of the mindset that any and all holidays should be learned about, celebrated, and enjoyed. No matter what your beliefs are, celebrations and traditions are a way for all to come together with joy and happiness. Happy Holidays to All!



Special Note to Parents



- We are again reminding parents **not to allow your children into other classrooms, or the playroom** while picking them up to go home. Our teachers are still with their class during classroom hours, or they are getting the room ready for the next day and to go home themselves. Please escort your children directly to the front doors and to your car. We appreciate your cooperation in this matter.
- Please check your child's mailbox every day.
- Reminding your children to **walk** in the hallway is a big help to us.
- It's nice when your child wants to say good-bye to us in the office, just please remind them it is not a place to stay and play.
- Please be mindful about parking in the circle out front when dropping off and picking up your child. Make sure you are parking with respect to others, as you would want them to do for you.