



JUNEAU CO-OP  
PRESCHOOL

# newsletter

March 2016

## Looking back and forward

- Still life drawing
- Musical Guests
- Ice Experiment
- Low Tide Trip
- Density bottles
- Planting
- Birds/Eggs
- Bus rides

### Hello Preschool Families

Some of Southeast’s traditional harbingers of spring have graced our classroom within the last month: pussy willows, blueberry blossoms and skunk cabbage were examined and drawn by many preschoolers and some of their parents. We hosted numerous bird visitors as well. Ask your child about Phil the gyrfalcon or Miss Kathleen’s parakeets. By the time you read this we hope to have introduced Blueberry the raven and some chickens too. We tried our hands at writing with quill pens and blew and painted eggs to decorate our spring branches. It was gratifying to witness a few initially reluctant children become expert egg blowers. Aaro and Nina could each blow out an egg in under five seconds by the end of the hour and donated blown eggs to children who were more interested in painting them.

We also embarked on a series of (admittedly imperfect) melting experiments precipitated by Lukas’ remark to Teacher Mary that “she better turn off the lights or that (play dough) ice cream was going to melt.” Most, though not all, children have been told or have enough life experience to know that frozen things will melt inside or in the sun. It makes sense that a child would think it was light causing the melting since light is so strongly associated with heat. We froze two ice cubes, brought them out to melt side by side, covering one with a bowl, and asked kids make predictions about which one would melt faster. Most predicted the one not covered would melt faster and they were correct although the difference could barely be discerned. Next, we left one ice cube uncovered and put an LED candle in with the covered ice cube. This time the predictions were evenly split and again the difference was negligible. Finally we hit upon the idea of covering one of the ice cubes inside and placing the other ice cube in the light outside. Many kids predicted the one outside would melt first (it was sunny but cold outside). This time it was obvious that the ice cube inside melted much faster despite being shielded from the light. When we measured the melting, Shaden exclaimed, “It was the hotness” and Lukas said, cheerfully, “I guess I was wrong.”

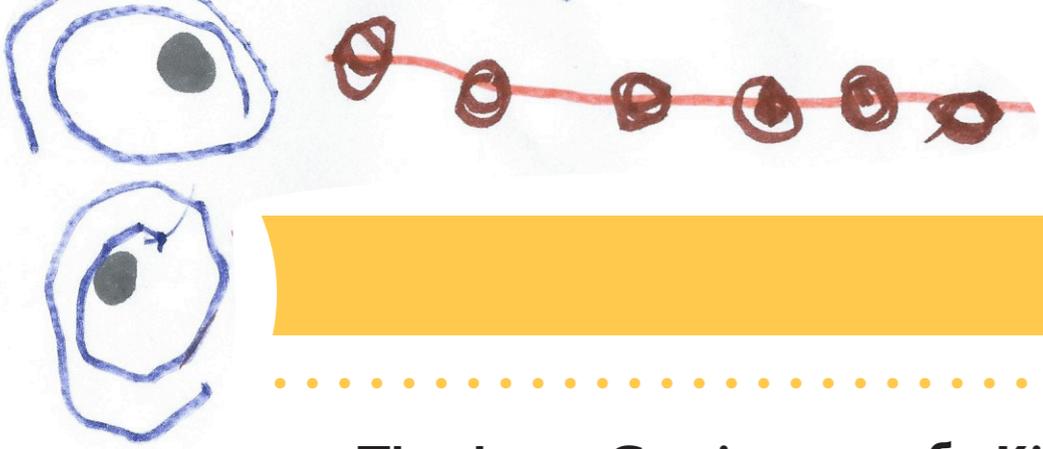
On the enrollment front, we bid goodbye to Forrest who has moved to Sitka and have sadly resigned ourselves to the idea of Cubby’s imminent departure. Both of them will be sorely missed. On the other hand we’re delighted to welcome Chava and her family back to preschool for the brief time they have left before they move. Last, but definitely not least, we’d like to extend our warmest congratulations to Hazel, Jasmine and Justin Himes on the birth of baby boy, Palmer.

### Mary, Rhonda, and Kathleen



Nina (watching Mary pierce eggs with a push pin):  
“Nina doesn’t usually play with little, sharp, pokey things so much.”





# Odds and Ends For March

## Thank you Gracias спасибо Kiitos Köszönöm

- **Jen Walker** (Beckett's mom) for sharing 'How the New Preschool Is Crushing Kids' excerpted from The Atlantic.
  - **Kristin Lee** (Sienna's mom), **DeAnna Ewing** (Penelope's mom), and everyone who brought baked goods for our movie fundraiser.
  - **Colette Costa** for her continuing generosity in allowing us to do movies at the Goldtown.
  - **Heidi Johnson** (parent alumnus), for introducing the Ages and Stages Developmental Checklist at our parent education night.
  - **Buck Willoughby** (Paxton's Dad) for filling in while Mary attended the early childhood conference.
  - **Mike Bury** (Berci's Dad) for taking on extra work days and for trimming the corner of the classroom door.
  - **DeAnna Ewing** for filling in while Mary is on vacation.
  - **Abbey Janes** (Mira's mom) for organizing the raffle.
  - **Irene** and her gyrfalcon, Phil, for visiting the MWF Class
  - **Miss Kathleen** for sharing her parakeets, Parkour and Speedy.
  - **Tim Travis** (Chloe's Dad) for lending his duck decoys.
- Thanks to all of you who came to conferences. Remember we can always do one upon request.

## Upcoming events

**March 21–25**  
**Spring Break**

Have a wonderful break!

**Saturday, April 2**  
**Not So Silent Silly Movies**

At Gold Town Nickelodeon. Shows at 11:00 a.m. & 5:00 p.m.

**Monday, April 11**  
**JCP Board Meeting**

6:00 p.m. Preschool classroom. Everyone is welcome.



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# Goodbye and Fairwell

## Dear Preschool Friends,

It is with a mixture of excitement and sadness (and maybe even a small dose of fear) that I have decided to make this my final year as a teacher at preschool. Know that I leave on a good note and not as a move away from preschool, but rather as a move towards new possibilities. My husband retires (again, and hopefully in earnest this time) in June and I am planning to create a schedule flexible enough to match his.

I have gained much from the children and parents I met while teaching at the Juneau Co-op Preschool over the past 12 years, and I do not look forward to missing the return of my preschool friends from this year and greeting a new generation of incoming three-year-olds in the fall.

Of course, the biggest change will be not working with Mary each week. I have learned as much about working with young children from teaching with her as I have from all of my official trainings put together. I know she will be an awesome mentor to whoever is hired to teach with her, modeling how to both seek to understand young children and meet them where they are, as well as inspire and guide them in their first school experience. Preschoolers at the co-op will continue thrive in her capable hands.

Although I will no longer be at preschool, I will still be in town - most likely doing something with kids - and look forward to crossing paths with you often. I wish you and your children all the best, and thank you for your support and friendship.

With gratitude,

**Rhonda**

## Vegan Cupcakes

We served these cupcases to celebrate Saana's birthday at the pre-school. Most of the kids were asking for seconds after they devoured their treat. The batter is versatile and can be baked to a cake or cupcakes. The original recipe\* is from allrecipes.com.

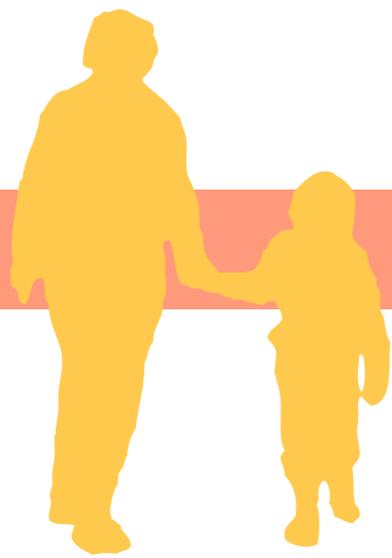
1½ cups	All-purpose flour
1 cup	White sugar
¼ cup	Cocoa powder
1 teaspoon	Baking soda
½ teaspoon	Salt
⅓ cup	Vegetable oil
1 teaspoon	Vanilla extract
1 teaspoon	Distilled white vinegar
1 cup	Water

Sift together the dry ingredients (flour, sugar, cocoa, baking soda and salt). Add oil, vanilla, vinegar and water to and mix until batter is smooth.

Bake at 350 F (175 °C) for 45 minutes. Allow to cool before decorating. We created simple frosting by mixing confectioner's sugar and water together until they form a paste (you can add a pinch of lemon or lime juice for taste). Enjoy.

\* <http://allrecipes.com/recipe/16779/vegan-chocolate-cake/>

Spin art by Maralie



# Ways you can help

## Springtime – What the Flux?

**Ahhhh... spring!** A time of renewal, awakening, and excitement; as well as, unpredictability, disruption and impatience. The energy associated with spring can be disorienting – for both parent and child.

On the positive side, spring is a time of initiative: a great time to “clean house” and clear out the figurative (and literal) cobwebs that have gathered over the long and somewhat disappointing winter. On the not-so-positive side, the “urgency” of spring can sometimes highlight the areas in which we consider ourselves, our partners, or our children to be lacking. And then, just to keep things interesting, we sprung the clocks forward, which has a tendency to enhance feelings that we need to get moving and “Seize the Day”.

Spring is a time of transition, and transitions can be difficult, to say the least! As adults, we might feel exhausted in anticipation of the demands of life right about now. Like spring, toddler-hood is also a period of transition... and it can test every facet of life for those in its vicinity like few things do. As your child gradually moves through this turbulent phase, take all the moments you can to restore yourself. Recognizing where you “end” and your child “begins” will help each of you to gain the autonomy that is burgeoning between you. Identifying and meeting your own needs is a skill well worth honing during this time, and it will serve you throughout your parenting years.

This is also a time of great initiative for your child. They are bursting with exaggerated growth spurts in muscle, thought processes, and language. Frustratingly, they can come across like “bulls in china shops” in their attempts at interacting with life. While they need clear boundaries, it’s important to remember that they are in their tender years. Giving the benefit of the doubt helps us to see the intent behind the attempt, and gives us enough “pause” to adjust our responses.

At preschool, we endeavor to encourage and expand your child’s initiative, openness and inquiries in all the activities they engage in, as it is important that a child in this stage perceives that they enhance their environment.

At home, it’s helpful to put this energy to use! Find daily chores for your young one; something fun and helpful, like checking the mail-box, straightening shoes, sweeping, feeding pets, watering plants, etc. If you’re finding this energy to be too much, getting your child outside helps. If they have a space they can go by themselves, even better! A little open air is a great antidote to the hubris associated with this age, as is humor! Laughing as much as possible is a goal worth aspiring to.

# Ways you can help

## Springtime – What the Flux?

Spring is an opportunity to “cultivate”. Have a fresh look at your preschooler, and let go of the preconceived notions or painted boxes of 6 months ago. Allow them to surprise you with the emerging traits and abilities. With a gentle eye, you might ask yourself questions that aid you in “seeing” them for the beings they are.

What aspects of your child do you want to bring to fruition? What aspects of your relationship with your child do you want to nurture? We can’t rush growth, but we can affect the environment in such a way as to encourage desirable outcomes. What behaviors do you want to encourage, or prune?

Resist the tendency to do too much this season. Don’t let the “busy-ness” of spring trick you into neglecting yourself. It’s true that we need to “get things done”. But we don’t need to get all the things done, all the time. And we definitely don’t need to get them done perfectly.



# What If Eyebrows Were...

What if my cheeks were rainbows?

Olin

What if your princess was an eyebrow?

Olivia

Worms

Fiona

Spiders

Aaro

Brownies or ducks

Santiago

Flowers are dangerous?

Vadim

What if your mouth was a dog?

Lous

What if whales were boots?

Forrest

Eyelashes

Penelope

What if an elephant was a hat?

Chloe

What if ladybugs would be hair?

Beckett and Cubby

A goat

Nina

Dinosaurs

Alexander

Ice

Winter

What if flowers were our eyes?

Shaden

What if my fingers were ice?

Gabe

Ducks

Hazel