



JUNEAU CO-OP  
PRESCHOOL

# newsletter

September 2015

## Looking forward

Bears, Bodies, Bones Set Up

Leaf Printing Mushrooms

Fall Planting and Harvest Mealworms

Cooking Projects Apples

### Hello Preschool Families

Preschool's been in session just three weeks as of this writing and we're off to a great start. We've explored mushrooms and slugs, picked, peeled, and cooked apples, and thanks to Beckett's mom, Jen, we've seen all the different life phases of the darkling beetle. All of our explorations have been interesting; we love to share a bit of the beauty and variety of the world with children. However, there's a deeper and perhaps more essential thing happening simultaneously. Your children are learning about separation, about trust, about friendship, about who they are in a world beyond the parameters of family and close friends. They may naturally vacillate between excitement and apprehension, especially those who are brand new to preschool. Even our returning students are finding that preschool is not exactly the same as they remember and of course they are not the same either. As we forge our community in the coming weeks and months, please remember that we welcome your questions, ideas, and input. Every year we learn more from our parents and students than they ever learn from us. It is such a privilege to be allowed to share in these early years of your child's life.

On a more prosaic note, we'll be hosting a parent ed meeting very soon on the nuts and bolts of a co-op work-day. This meeting is intended mainly for new preschool parents. This year we're also attempting to address the nuances of the work day and some of the philosophy behind what we do through newsletter articles and we encourage even the most experienced co-op members to look them over. You may find out something you didn't know. There's so little time to convey the finer points once children start arriving at preschool. We have a saying borrowed from a long ago student that still applies to all the young children we know with them it's always "now o'clock." We're happy to answer questions or discuss issues after school, via email, telephone, or scheduled meetings. Just ask.

With thanks and appreciation,

**Mary, Rhonda, and Kathleen**



Kalvin (in a tone of hushed amazement): "Can I tell you something? My dad has a mother! And she's even alive!"



# Pre-School notes

## Thank you Gracias Merci Danke Kiitos Köszönöm

- Jaime Zellhuber (Maralie's mom) for bravely tackling set-up alone though she is brand new to preschool.
- Colin Osterhout (Winter's dad) for improving the awesome rope swings.
- Paige McGuan (Gabe's mom) and DeAnna Ewing (Penelope's mom) for plugging holes in the T/Th schedule.
- Krisztina Bury (Berci's mom), for the new play kitchen donation.
- Mike Bury (Berci's dad) for outside hollow block repair.
- Buck Willoughby (Paxton's Dad) for knowing how to wield bolt cutters and free the toys in the play shed.
- Everyone who helped at set-up.
- Tim Ewing (Penelope's dad) for beautifully repairing our baby carriage and scooter.
- Jen Walker (Beckett's mom) for sharing darkling beetles in all their life stages with us.
- Ellen Andrews (Alexander's mom) for new reading chair donation, delivered by wagon!
- Terry Schwarz and Shannon Siefert (Eddy's parents) for laptop donation and computer expertise during our recent computer crash.
- Pastor Phil Campbell for letting us harvest apples from his tree.
- The good folks at Kapler computers who gave us a deal on a computer and set it up for us in record time.
- Laisne Waldron (alumni parent) for making that happen and for her generous, behind-the-scenes donation of time and talent to our preschool.

## Upcoming events

### Friday 10/2 Alumni Day

Juneau School District Holiday,  
preschool in session.  
Older siblings welcome for the 1st hour of pre-school

### Monday 10/5 JCP Board Meeting

6:00–8:00 p.m. Preschool Classroom

All Welcome

### Tuesday 10/13 Parent Education Evening

5:30–7:00 p.m. Preschool Classroom

Nuts and bolts of a parent workday.  
Pizza and child care available.

# Board Member

## Biographies

### **Buck Willoughby** Co-president

Second year at preschool with 4 year old son Paxton! Our favorite things about preschool are the “hands on” activities!

### **Kara Hollatz** Co-president

This will be Nina’s first year at JCP. She will be attending T/Th. She is excited to spend time with Pebbles the guinea pig and do some painting.

### **Shannon Seifert** Publicity

Our family is excited for Eddy (M/W/F) to start his second year at JCP, where Eddy’s favorite thing about preschool is “the dress up area!” I love playing outside in the rain with friends and my favorite fundraiser is “Saturday Morning at the Movies.”

### **Maressa Jensen** Secretary/Personnel

This is my 3rd year, second go-round at JCP. I served on the board 2 years ago when my daughter attended and am back now for MWF class with my son Shaden (3yo). My favorite thing about preschool is the insight and wisdom I gain from association with our wonderful teachers. Shaden is very excited about climbing and swinging and painting...

### **Averyl Veliz** Treasurer

Our son Vincenzo is 4 and in his second year at JCP. This year he is in the MWF class. Our daughter Giada is 2 and can’t wait till it’s her time to go; she especially loves our work days. I am your new treasurer, and look forward to getting to know all of you very soon. In my not-at-preschool time, I work from home as a freelance graphic artist and illustrator. My husband, Christian, is the branch manager at Behrend’s Key Bank.

### **Krisztina Bury** Registration coordinator

A few years back we got to be part of this amazing preschool with my older son, Bence, and now we are back for another fantastic round with our younger one, Bertalan, for his second year of fun in the MWF class. There is no day without him asking whether it is a school day and being very disappointed if it is not.

### **Heather Skaggs** Co-fundraising coordinator

This is Chase’s first year at JCP. He and I are both looking forward to making new friends.

### **Kristin Lee** Co-event Committee Chair

Kristin Lee has joined the board this year to fill the position of Co-event Committee Chair. She has one daughter, Sienna (4), who is in the M/W/F class, and also a one-year-old son named Lennox. She and her family are new to Juneau this year and are greatly enjoying living in such a beautiful place. She has worked as an RN, but stays at home with her kids at this time. She looks forward to all the upcoming fundraising events for the 2015–2016 year!

### **Paige McGuan** Tues/Thurs Class Rep

3rd year at the JCP, Garrett went through and now it’s Gabe’s turn! Our favorite things about the co-op are the amazing teachers and how much they care about each child.



# Ways you can help

## Snack Time

### DAILY SCHEDULE

8:30	Parent volunteers and their children arrive
9–9:15	Preschoolers arrive
9–10:15	Open centers in the classroom
9:15–10:15	Climbing room opens
<i>(The following times may vary slightly)</i>	
10:15	Clean-up time
10:30	Reading/Group time
11:00	Snack time
11:15	Outside play
12:00	Preschool ends
12–12:45	Parent volunteers clean up

**“What should I bring for snack?”** A good place to start is by checking the allergy list posted on the refrigerator. This year the list is short and does not include any severe allergies, so it is mostly important to provide choices. You can take suggestions from your child on what they would like to bring. Talk with them about some of the foods they enjoy eating at home and deciding on 2 or 3 that they think their preschool friends might enjoy. Realize that food is welcome after two hours of playing, be it simple or elaborate. There are often picky eaters in our midst, and though we don’t need to cater to them, it is helpful to have at least one basic offering. If you need inspiration you can always take a look at the preschool snack menu to see what others have brought. We do not want snack to be stressful or a burden on your time or your budget, so bring what works for you and your child.

Cooking is great science and we love it when the children can help prepare the snack at preschool, so please bring us your ideas, but please let us know ahead of time so we can set up a space for them happen. When teachers are planning a cooking project, we will let the snack parent know ahead of time, too.

Teachers and working parents have a half hour together to prepare for the preschool day before children begin arriving at 9:00. This is the time when we finish setting up the room, get snack prepared, and discuss the activities offered that day. Once the children begin arriving at 9:00 it is all hands on deck, when parents and teachers are needed to give the children our full attention. There are three successive and relatively quick transitions that happen between choice time and snack. The children need adults to guide them in clean up and then read to them in small groups as clean up winds down, so there is no time for food prep between the start of preschool and snack time. This means that the majority of snack prep must be done during that first half hour.

What needs to be done when you first arrive? First, write down what food will be served that day on the snack menu. This form is attached to a clipboard and hanging on the wall between the kitchen sink and the blue dish shelves. Posting and keeping this record is required by childcare licensing, so please list your snack there when it is your snack day.

Next, prepare four sets of serving dishes for your items. We serve family style, so there is one set for each table. Crackers can go in baskets, fruit in larger bowls or on plates, etc. The idea is to prepare the food in a way that allows children to make choices and to serve themselves. There are four small pitchers, usually stored on the shelf above the kitchen sink. Fill these 1/3 to 1/2 full with water. Many of the children can pour themselves, but partially filling them make them easier for small hands to handle and help to avoid spills.



# Ways you can help

## Snack Time



Apple print by Berci

**Your preschooler** may or may not be interested in helping you set up snack, and either is fine. It can be a treat for them to have the classroom to themselves. Also, if the two “working” preschoolers are not already established play mates, this is can be an opportunity for new friendships to take root. If your child does want to help you, counting out stacks of cups and plates, one stack for each table, washing fruits or vegetables, and dividing food into equal shares in four serving bowls are all ways they can help. Our enrollment numbers vary, so count out enough cups and plates needed for the number of children in attendance that day as well as the four adults. Food should be stored on top of the blue dish shelves or in the refrigerator; otherwise there is the chance it disappears before snack time.

Your snack duties resume at group time, when the teacher begins reading a story to the whole class. At this time you can set the tables with cups, plates and water pitchers only. Please do not put the food on tables until we excuse children to wash hands, since it can be difficult for a story to compete with snack. Your child is welcome to leave group and help you with setting the tables, but ask other children to return to group, reminding them they will get a chance to set the tables when it is their snack day.

Once the teacher has begun excusing children from group to wash hands, you can begin putting food on the tables. After they have washed their hands, children can help you set tables with any remaining food. Snack time is a time for learning and sharing and the children continue to benefit from our guidance, so one adult should be seated at each table to achieve a family-style snack experience. If the children of both working parents are at the same table and both insistent that their parents join them, it is fine to accommodate them. Teachers will strategize so that the tables that need an adult most get one.

While they do not need to wait until everyone is seated to begin eating, it is good to help preschoolers with portion control. We can help them to notice how much food is still on their plate before they take more, and notice if their friends have all had a chance to take a serving. It may be helpful to remind them that this is just a snack and that, fortunately, we will all have lunch at the end of the preschool morning.

Preschool is a time of growing independence, but each child is different, progressing in different areas at different times. Adults need to be present with each child, allowing opportunities for self-sufficiency, yet being ready to offer support when needed. At snack, there are many such opportunities: pouring water from a pitcher, peeling oranges or hard boiled eggs, opening wrappers on cheese sticks or fruit leather. If you do not know a child’s abilities, ask if they can do it or if they want help. If they want you to do it, describe what you are doing as you do it, or ask if they want to help you do it. You can both hold a water pitcher and pour together, each take a side of a cheese wrapper to pull apart, or start peeling an orange and ask if they want to finish it.



# Ways you can help

## Snack Time



Apple print by Nina

**You can recruit** children who have mastered a particular skill to assist their friends. This type of scaffolding, a child watching another child, will sometimes encourage a preschooler to want to work towards learning the skill themselves more than if an adult does it for them.

Spills will occur, and when they do, we treat it without blame and encourage the children to help with the clean-up. “Oh, there is a spill. We need a towel to clean that up.” In order to help them be successful, the child may need to be directed to where the towels are hanging at the end of the blue dish shelf, or shown how to lay the towel on top of a spill so the puddle does not get pushed off the table onto their friends’ laps.

Preschoolers sometimes need our guidance when it comes to table conversation. For some reason, snack time often turns into a silly time, with nonsense talk, mimicry and, yes, potty talk. While potty talk does not need to be allowed to go unchecked, it need not be given too much attention. Simply stating that this kind of talk is not polite, asking the child to stop, and then redirecting the conversation is often the best way to handle it. If the child persists, simply asking them to pick up their plate, saying that it is time to leave the table and get ready to go outside is another option. Please do not hesitate to call on a teacher to take over if you are at a loss in such situations.

You are encouraged to join the conversation with the children at your table, following their lead or bringing up topics that help you get to know them, and them to know each other. Asking preschoolers about their families, their activity choices that morning, or following up on the story just read at group are a few examples of ways to bring about a sense of shared community experience. Of course, if they engage in friendly conversation of their own accord, there is no need to be overly directive.

As children begin to leave snack, encourage each child to clear his/her own spot. Teachers will be the first to leave with children to either the coat room or bathroom. Working parents will need to follow the flow and help with dressing children to go outside. Teachers and both working parents will be needed on the play yard until parents begin arriving for pick up, so cleaning dishes will need to wait until after preschool.

We teachers look forward to snack almost as much as the preschoolers, so we all appreciate your regular contribution to this important part of our routine. Please let us know if you have questions or thoughts on this or any other part of a preschool work day.

# Meal Worm

## Remarks

Why's there  
toast in there?

Penelope

They're  
cool!

Fiona

I like the  
white worms.  
They're tickle.

Winter

I wish I had  
100 million  
arms to hold  
them.

Berci

Do mealworms  
eat sandwiches?

Chase (looking at  
the bread slices in  
the bin)

This one  
went on his  
back but I  
fixed him.

Olin

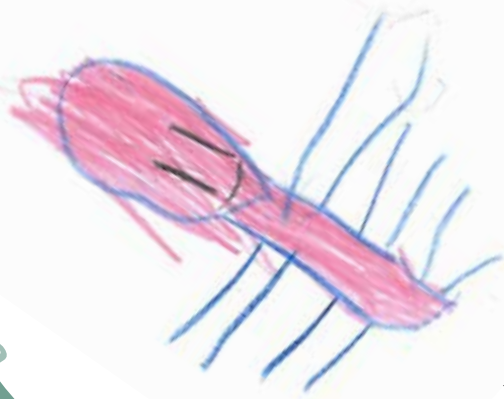
Look at all  
these little  
beetles!

Nina

Jen Walker shared LOTS of mealworms with both classes. We got to see them in each phase of life: larvae, pupae, and adult beetles.

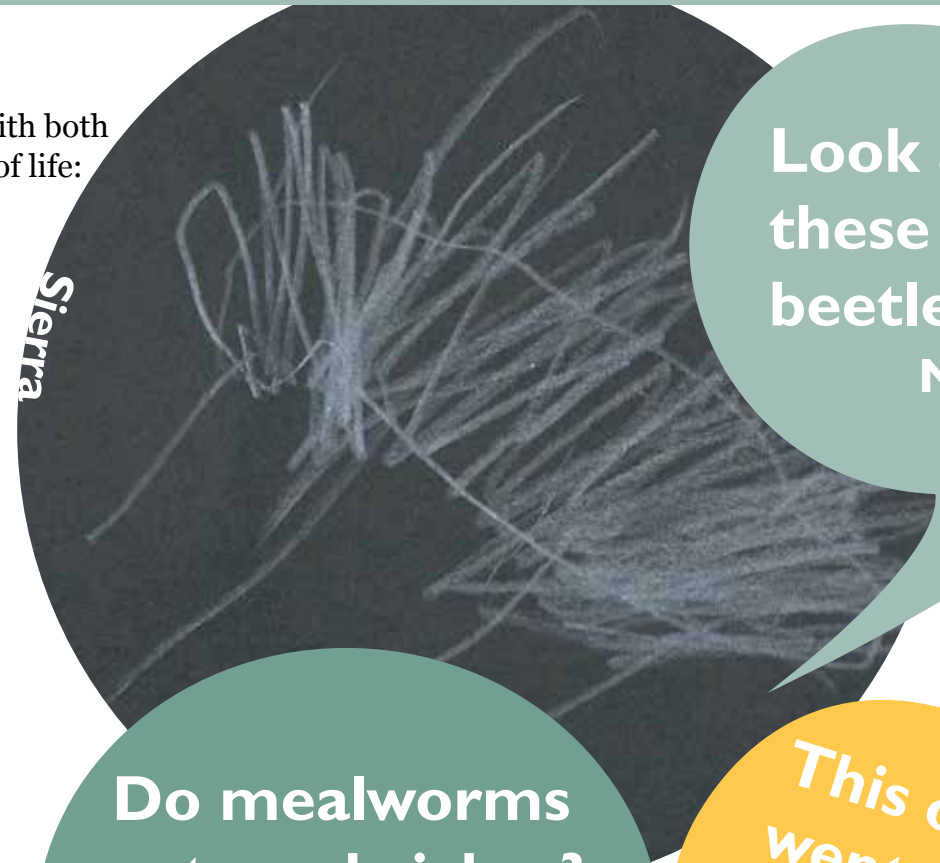


Lucy



Saana

Sierra



Mary



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