



2005 Summer Newsletter

Early Childhood Centre, UNB Fredericton

UNB Preschool

So here we are...the final newsletter of the year. It seems like such a short time ago we were watching the leaves and temperatures slowly dropping...The preschool staff would like to thank all of our parents and families for their volunteer support, kindness and good will throughout the year. We would also like to thank you for the opportunity to teach your children during this school year, and the privilege that experience bestowed upon us. We have had such a wonderful year, and been witness to so much growth and personal development, from the bottom of our hearts - thank you.

Butterflies are free...

The study of life cycles brought us to one of our more interesting projects - the butterfly house. As with the chicks, we had to deal with some disappointments along with the success and the wonder. However, in the end, we allowed 3 painted lady butterflies (the guessing game as to what type of butterfly they were went on to the end!) to begin an existence in the great outdoors. We were very curious to see what kind of reaction the butterflies would have to their new freedom, and that playtime outside consisted mostly of "I wonder when they're going to take off!!"

Puma and the Robots

In May, we took a little walk down the hill to Head Hall (UNB) to visit the robotics laboratory. Parker and Juan (who we thank for the tour and the fun) showed us a wonderful time (is there anything cooler when you're 4 yrs. old than a robot that opens a tool box and gives out candy?), and we learned a lot about Canada's contribution to space exploration and to the space station (the Canadarm). We also saw robots that were programmed to perform in patterns, like drawing and dancing (it did "the robot" only slightly better than Kimi does...) and we also operated a robot by remote control. A very cool experience with technology...



Frogs and worms (and other lovely critters...)

Perhaps the part of the classroom that did the most 'booming business' during the spring was our observation table. Nary a week (at some points, even a day...) went by without an addition to our table. Frog spawn, a robin's egg (complete with nest), spiders, tiny yellow worms, earthworms and other crawling delights graced our classroom, and allowed us to observe life on a small scale. If what Socrates said is true, that "wisdom begins in wonder", then much wisdom was gained through the observations of the children at our science table this year.

We're attracted to magnets

We were treated to a full morning of the wonders of magnetism thanks to the efforts of Esme's father, Ben. Aside from the various centres that were a part of the classroom environment, Ben gave us a taste of homemade storytelling via the adventures of 'Sir Brian'. Home and school connections of that type are vital to honouring home literacies. A fun and informative time was had by all, and the magnets that were already in our classroom took on a whole new popularity due to Ben sharing of his time and knowledge.

Learning about disabilities

We can learn as much from those that face the challenges of illness as we can from the healers and practitioners of medicine. Jim (out facilitator), Greg (who introduced the session), Jonathon & Nicole (who turned the pages of the big book I'm Wendy Blair, Not A Chair), Will (who read Wendy Blair), Rory (a fantastic juggler) and Rebecca (who closed our session) from the group "Youth for the Future" gave us a glimpse into the lives of people that succeed in spite of medical difficulty, and want to share their experience with others to promote tolerance and understanding.

The medical team is on their way!

On May 31st, Rachel Ouelette, Megan Hayes and Nancy Barker, three medical interns from the Chalmers Hospital, visited us to support our exploration of medicine that started with metamorphosis of our dramatic play area into a hospital. From stories, to the experience of listening to the human heart, to the feeling of plaster hardening on our fingers, our medical guides gave us a chance to learn more about our own bodies, and learn about the universality of some aspects of our lives, as well as develop some empathy for those that a medical team might treat.



Art Gallery Field trip

On June 10th, we took a tour of the Beaverbrook Art Gallery in downtown Fredericton. Despite some minor transportation difficulties ("it was my watch - uh, the battery...really", said Glenn), we had a wonderful tour of both the portrait gallery and the tapestry room. Also, we were able to meet Fran, who guided us through some engaging activities in the art room in the basement of the Art Gallery. We really enjoyed the tour, and Fran's fun and playful nature. This field trip was organized by Lucinda Dow, a teacher brought in on a part time basis, who has training from the NB College of Craft and Design as part of her education background. She has been working with the children up to 3 days a week in the area of Art Education - aspects of painting, the science of colour, and art appreciation, among other topics. Thanks, Lucinda!

Preschool Yard Sale

On Saturday, June 11th, our long-awaited yard sale was held. Our volunteers and families were, of course, helpful and generous, and it was heartening and gratifying to receive the support, good wishes and donations from UNB staff and faculty. To those folks who contributed, thank you again for your support (if we haven't said it enough!). The rain managed to hold off, and the event raised a total of \$543.20 that will be put into the UNB Preschool Playground fund. Also, there were a number of corporate sponsors for this event (a real testament to the value the community at large felt about our project), and to them, we would like to express our gratitude for their kindness and contributions.

Year-end Celebration

On Wednesday, June 22nd, from 4:30 to 6:00 p.m., the UNB preschool will be holding its year-end celebration on the Playground and in the classroom (hey, the food has to go somewhere!). It is an opportunity to honour and validate the hard work (disguised as fun whenever possible) that adults, teachers and children alike have put into this year. We hope everyone can attend, and we have invited our "alumni" (at 5 yrs. old, who'da thunk it!?!), and even next year's children and their families. Allan Bloom said, "Education is the movement from darkness to light." As our year ends, we hope that your futures are bright with the light that knowledge brings.

"You oughta be in pictures..."

Our special thanks go out to Maria, who came in to both group and individual pictures of the kids. If you haven't been able to get the pictures you want, please feel free to talk to Kimi or Glenn about contact information for Maria.

A nod to our volunteers and special friends

As a final note, the staff of the preschool would like to thank the efforts of all the people who have volunteered for various activities during the year. Shelley Thorne, Jennifer Gardiner and Alison Buckley have been friends that have been very generous with their time and effort during the spring and early summer (such as it has been...). Marilee Francis, Dawna Riding and Carrol Long have been instrumental in aiding us with various projects during the school year. We thank them, as well as all of our volunteers throughout the year, for their kindness, for their patience and for their recognition that they are members of "the village" that informs and educates our young minds.

GOOD LUCK NEXT YEAR EVERYBODY!!

