



Datebook

April 5

SPRING CONCERT

April 6 and 9

SCHOOL CLOSED

April 13

SPRING BOAT SCHEDULE BEGINS

City families

morning drop off 8:15
ferry departs city at 8:30
afternoon pick up 4:45 pm

Island families

morning drop off 8:45
at Ward's dock
afternoon pick up 4:10
at Ward's dock

Saturday, April 21,
at 7 pm

POKER NIGHT

May 5

WMCC/AIA WORK PARTY

May 21

SCHOOL CLOSED

June 29

Last Day of School

Spring update

THE HUNDRED LANGUAGES OF CHILDREN

Kathleen and I attended a conference and exhibit of this name in late February from an enthusiastic suggestion of Lee's mom, Sarah Rosensweet, who is currently in teacher's college at University of Toronto. The exhibit shows the groundbreaking and now world-reknown preschool program in a city in Italy, Reggio Emilia. Here is a write-up about it

The world-class municipal system of education for the very young in the northern Italian city of Reggio Emilia has drawn international acclaim initially because of the extraordinary work produced by the children, then because of the extraordinarily beautiful way of life they have sustained in these schools for over 40 years. The city of Reggio Emilia is consistently rated by OECD as one of the top 10 cities in the world to live in, year after year. Its attention to the culture, care and education of its youngest citizens is a significant aspect of this overall rating.

The keystone of their approach is the image of children as capable, resourceful and powerful, with interesting thoughts and strong feelings about their world. If we see children as strong, capable participants living with us, it changes our approach to them. The Reggio approach teaches teachers to study children's understanding of their world rather than to teach in a transmission model, to work collaboratively with parents and the city rather than to work in isolation and to invite children to explore multiple ways of expressing their knowledge of

the world. They emphasize high-quality materials, high-quality relationships, unhurried time, responsiveness to children and deep connections.

The Reggio Approach is not a model of education to be implemented. It cannot be replicated. The Reggio educators encourage those impressed with their approach to be creative in developing their own response to it, rather than copy what they have done and so create their own identity embedded in the local context.

Judy's response

I found the exhibit stimulating and validating for some of the ways that I have viewed and responded to children in my teaching. I found the ideals enhancing to the Montessori approach of discovery, wonder and beauty. Also, I felt inspired to think of more ways to look with the children and their natural desire for learning in our wonderful natural environment here on the Island. One of the premises that I appreciated being reminded of is that children have many, many languages of learning and that growth in one area is growth in all areas. I find that I am asking more questions and listening not just to their answers but to what is important to them as they answer. The poem at the end of this article reflects this attitude.

continued on the following page

Kathleen's response

I felt really inspired to just go to work and do my job. I also felt a lot of pride in our school. We really have a special place and a unique opportunity every day to create the extraordinary for children. What a gift that is.

The Hundred Languages of Children

The following is a poem by Loris Malaguzzi (translated by Lella Gandini) about the Hundred Languages of Children

*No way. The hundred is there.
The child is made of one hundred.
The child has a hundred languages
a hundred hands
a hundred thoughts
a hundred ways of thinking of playing, of speaking.*

*A hundred always a hundred ways of listening
of marvelling, of loving a hundred joys
for singing and understanding
a hundred worlds to discover
a hundred worlds to invent
a hundred worlds to dream.*

*The child has a hundred languages
(and a hundred hundred hundred more)
but they steal ninety-nine.*

*The school and the culture separate the head
from the body.
They tell the child:
to think without hands
to do without head
to listen and not to speak
to understand without joy
to love and to marvel only
at Easter and at Christmas.*

*They tell the child: to discover the world already
there and of the hundred they steal ninety-nine.
They tell the child:
that work and play
reality and fantasy
science and imagination
sky and earth
reason and dream
are things
that do not belong together.*

*And thus they tell the child
that the hundred is not there.
The child says:
No way. The hundred is there.*

Judy

Humming Birds

IN THE WINTER WONDERLAND

We did our best to help the children enjoy winter with stories, songs, and some lovely walks in the crisp air. In December, we were wondering if we would be talking about ice and snow in the New Year. It was nice to have Old Man Winter here so we could do all of those traditional winter activities and read winter stories.

Well, we have and it was good, educational and great fun for the children. They had a blast playing in the snow, we had many days of exploration to see nature in her glory, ice formations, fun and a great view from the big bus from Hanlan's Point. And the park it is such a great resource to get the most out of life. If the craziness of winter traveling makes you wonder if it is worth it to get to that ferry, let me assure you it is from what I have seen in your children's happy faces! It seems like we have more time to enjoy it and the children are really flourishing.

Our youngest children have been busy with different activities. They are all quite opinionated on how each other should behave. This is a good sign when you are two and three because, when they start to tell each other what to say and how to say it, you know that they are learning how to behave themselves.

This is the time of year that we really enjoy the classrooms and the big hall for dancing and movement. Some of the younger children have started to visit and work in the classroom with the Big Kids which benefits both the younger and the older children. In our school, the multi-age grouping is an integral part of our program. The younger children feel taken care of and learn new skills in all areas of development from social interaction to practical things like pouring juice or putting on their own boots. They also learn that they are part of a bigger community. It is wonderful for the older children to become the teacher, the helper and the friend. The younger ones look up to them and you can see the pride in their eyes as they share a joke or see how the younger child appreciates them for what they do for them. Multi-age interactions can be challenging, too, as older children experience explaining things to someone who is just as stubborn as themselves! This improves their problem solving abilities and can help them be more self aware. Being one of the Big Kids is all about feeling respected, experiencing responsibility, and learning about leadership.

As we head into the warmer weather the word *freedom* comes to mind. There will be lots of fresh air and visits to the meadow, the gardens, the frog pond, the farm and Franklin's garden. We are looking for proof of spring and our summer to come.

We have welcomed two new faces this year: Ainsley and her mom and dad, Elaine and Matthew; and Conner and his parents Quennie and Gregg.

Kathleen

POKER NIGHT IS ONLY A FEW WEEKS AWAY

WMCC 2nd ANNUAL

Poker Night

FUNDRAISER

Our Second Annual Poker Night to benefit WMCC will be held on Saturday, April 21. Last year's Poker Night was a huge success. The grand-prize winner went home with \$ 1,300 and the school raised \$ 3,000! This year, we are hoping to do even better.

This is a professionally run poker game. No money is present during the evening – registration fees are due before the event – and we play with chips only. Winners will receive a cheque at the end of the night.

Help us fill the tables with happy card players!

We are counting on *all* parents to publicize this game and enlist at least two

people. Even if you don't play yourself, invite friends, co-workers, family etc. to come have a great night of fun and also help the school.

**Saturday, April 21st
7 p.m.
The Spoke Club
600 King Street West
Buy-in is \$ 125**

Please make cheques payable to Sue Avis.

If you have any questions regarding the night, please speak to Sue, Marcia, Karen, Claire or any other Board member.

FROM THE Office

Fall and Summer Camp Registration Forms

Registration forms are attached to this Newsletter.

All registration for the next School Year and Summer Camp is on a first-come-first-served basis. All registration forms must be complete to ensure your spot. There are changes in the payment schedule, which have been designed to meet more parents' needs. If you have any questions about forms or need to discuss your child's enrolment please call the school. We are happy to talk on the phone or organize a parent-teacher interview.

I would like to thank all the parents who have referred families to WMCC.

In the coming months we will be promoting the Centre's Summer Camp and Fall 2007 Program

Your help is needed to fill the spaces at the school.

Here are ways that you can help:

- Recommend WMCC to your friends and neighbours
- Help distribute brochures
- Think about places parents like you go and take our brochures there. (Perhaps you could post one in your building, local coffee spot, workplace, gym, dance studio, library dentist, doctor's office...) TIP: I always ask first and check back periodically to make sure the information has not been defaced or removed. (Replace if it has).

Parents are our best promoters! Call the office if you can help distribute brochures.

Community REPORT

- Spring ferry schedule begins April.
- The Rectory Café is open Wednesday to Sunday.
- The Café at the Ward's Island Association (near the Ward's ferry dock) is opening in May.
- Centre Island opens when the spring ferry schedule begins.
- There is a event at Franklin's Garden in April. For more information, call 416.392.8192.

House Trade (ad from a community member)

Want to live on Toronto Island for a year? Do you live in the Annex or Little Italy?

Islander looking to trade a charming 3 bedroom home, with 2 bath, fireplace, big yard and a garden for a year cityside, starting September. We come with a well-mannered dog. Contact Linda or Robin 416.203.1038.

CALL FOR NEW BOARD MEMBERS

The Board Needs You to Sign Up

WMCC BOARD of Sue, Claire, Karen, Katherine, Meg, Leah and Marcia have been working on marketing, fundraising and financial matters.

Coming soon, will be a call for new members to step up to the plate and get on the Executive. We are a not-for-profit *parent-run* childcare centre. We run and thrive because of hard work and the payoff is one of the best preschools in Toronto.

As many people have said over the years (16 or 17 for me...I've lost count), we are one of the best kept secrets in Toronto.

Thank you for all of your work.

Bus Report & A BIG THANK YOU

Our Bus, now named Miss Piggy, had a difficult March. One of her belts ripped apart on the coldest day of the year. We were rescued, however, by the Church (Blessings to them again), and Paul Horn (from the Parks), who identified that we, indeed, had quite a problem. We got help from a surprising source. As it happens, down at the Royal Canadian Yacht Club, there are woodworkers, metal workers, riggers and mechanics working away on boats. Our connection to them is that Betsy (our cook) and Vivian (our teacher) are married to two of them. Martin Lister is a rigger and David Pitcher is the boss of the Marine Yard and also Lisa's Poppa! (Soon to be a Grandpoppa!)

On the fateful day that the bus would not run (and no tow truck driver could even imagine getting on the ferry), I was pulling my hair out in the kitchen with worry about it. Both Betsy and Vivian got on the phone. Practically within the hour there was not one but two mechanics looking into our bus. Their names are George and Carlos. Over the next couple of days they figured out the problem, purchased a part (a really long belt) and installed it so I could take it into the city to our mechanic to get more work done. They even provided a list of some other things that needed attention for our mechanic.

The following week, Lisa, a group of the children and I (Kathleen) took some treats (baked by Betsy) and a huge thank you card in the shape of a School Bus down to the Yacht Club to thank them personally. The children sang *I've the Bye* for them. They really liked the card and told the children that they would hang it in their coffee room.

The children were also treated to a tour of the boat yard, which fits right into the concert theme. The children got to see the huge propeller of the Yacht Club ferry.

So that is the story of how a horrible cold day turned into a happy ending. Thank you to Joyce Rogers of the Church, Paul from Parks, David and his team and especially George and Carlos. Stay tuned to more adventures from Miss Piggy's friends!

PARENT JOBS & Work Party MAY 5th

Well, spring is here. The park is full of Robins and Blue Jays (the ones with feathers)! The winter ducks haven't left, which is a bit of a worry, however, all of this only means one thing: It is time to spruce up the school and get ready for warmer weather.

WORK PARTY May 5th is our day to clean, paint, fix, tidy etcetera. There are also jobs like fixing books, sorting pictures and, for the computer savvy, we (I mean me) need help sorting out how to get the computer to print out the phone list!

There will be a list of jobs at the Spring Concert for you to check out. There will also be a notice coming out closer to the date. Please call us if you are interested in getting involved in organizing and, for those of you that like shopping in hardware stores for paint etc., call the office at 416.203.1017. Please sign up and plan to have fun. It is a work PARTY after all!

P.S. AND THANK YOU FOR...

Not all jobs have to happen on the Work Party Day. There is always opportunity to take on projects that keep our costs down and generally get things done.

For example, thanks to:

- **James**, founding father of WMCC, father of Lolly and grandfather of Nyameke, fixed up all our Montessori Maps.
- **Steve** (Naz's dad) helped us put the AIA stage away after New Years and he is coming to help set it up for the concert.
- **Janet** (Jacob and Rebecca's mom) set up a craft activity of painting cookie trays for the Spring Concert.
- **Claire** (Matthew's mom and Fundraising Chair) helped purchase a new printer for the computer after the old one had what Judy and Kathleen call a "Lucille Ball moment." Now we need someone to set in up for us. Any takers?
- **Victoria** (Clotilde's mom) came in for an entire day to help out.
- **Cheryl** (Emma's mom) and her friend Sheri came in to do a wonder music program.
- **Valerie** (Naz's Mom) came and read to the children.
- **Pamela** (Wim's Mom) organized the Scholastic fundraiser.
- **Claire** and **Nancy** (Eva's Mom) have been helping me update the Parent Handbook which will be out to you soon.

Scholastic Book Club

Hello! I have volunteered to organize the Scholastic book club for the school and thought you might like to know how it works. Scholastic offers parents very reasonably priced, high quality book choices via monthly flyers that have been appearing in your children's

backpacks. When you place an order for books for a child, this generates free book choices and bonus coupons for the school. The school can use the bonus coupons to order more books or to acquire educational resources for free!

I hope you enjoy the selections available from Scholastic. If you have any questions or wish to reach me, please feel free to call me.

Pamela

The Big Kid CLASSROOM REPORT

Classroom Time

Through the cold winter months the children have continued to “play” and “work” at the many learning and creative activities in our program. Reading and learning letter activities, math and building work, creative play and lots of drawing and art activities have filled up the days. There is a lot of joy in the learning. We firmly believe that all of what the children do is significant and important. It is also the amount of joy experienced and the amount of focus or sustained attention that the children are growing into with the different activities that we look for, not necessarily just the level of accomplishment with letters and numbers. Growth in one kind of learning affects growth in all areas. We are, of course, happy with their many accomplishments and victories but it is more important how they feel and what they know through their own experience that validates their own self worth.



Big Kids hard at work



Stargazing and 1,000 Beads

One interesting highlight with the Montessori activities is the 1,000 chain, which is a culmination of all the previous years of learning in a Montessori program. It is a chain of 100 groups of 10 beads. A child puts small counts by ten all the way to 1,000. A child who was recently doing the activity ask me if there was an infinity chain. After doing the counting we arranged the chain in a circle and I asked if there was

a beginning or end. Perhaps this was the infinity chain? As we ponder this and other great questions we are studying the Universe. Lisa has created a star gazing chamber, our very own planetarium with a set of stars.

Our Nature Record

News Bulletin

Dateline March 12, 2007...

A large brown animal is spotted climbing onto the icy shore. It is a beaver! As the children from WMCC come off the ferry in the morning, they watch the beaver shuffling along on the ice. We ask, “Is it hunting for some sticks to take back to his lodge and to chew on through the rest of the winter?” After about three minutes, it dives

back into the water and then we observe its long, long underwater swim. It emerges about 20 metres out into the lake.

Back at school, we look at a book which shows pictures of a beaver lodge and a close-up of the beaver tail.

Dateline March 14, 2007...

A small group of children went for a walk with Vivian along the shore and then through the meadow. Although it is still winter cold they spot a bird with a red breast and black head. The first robin of the year has returned!

Staff REPORT

You may have heard more about **Tanya, Vivian** and **Ariel**, who are our faithful supply and part-time staff as some of the staff are away on holidays, etc.

Where’s Laurie? And for some, *who* is Laurie? **Laurie**, our Administrator is working in Haliburton running an art gallery and is coming in very part-time to do her office duties. She has worked for us for eight years and she is also a former parent of Claire, Tony an Erik who are now quite tall and very grown up! Laurie’s work with us has been crucial in getting us computerized, organized and she can also clean a furnace and fix toilets and even taught French for awhile. She has many talents. However, due to our financial changes and stresses and Laurie’s working needs, we have had to scale back our administration costs. We are currently trying to figure out how to run the place without her. This has been a challenge but also an opportunity to recreate it all. For those of you who don’t know Laurie is a painter. You can view her work at www.lauriejones.net.

Lisa’s baby is due end of May, so we will have to say goodbye for a while. **Leslie Stahl** will fill her shoes. Leslie is an old pro to WMCC because she worked for us for two years several years ago. She is a trained Montessori teacher, a Celtic scholar and a trained musician who misses the Island. Leslie will start mid-May and be a part of the Summer Camp.

Taz is a Ryerson student doing a work placement on Thursday mornings. She is also a former WMCC parent and Board member. Her son Caleb is now at Island Public School.

Maeve and **Ariel** are former students who have come back to do their high school community service placement.

Kitchen REPORT

Just so you know, our food is fabulous! Betsy is carrying on the tradition of fabulous cooks at our school. She has created a menu that is nutritious and the children actually eat, which is another WMCC tradition. Betsy is also collecting quite an assortment of cookie cutters for all of our different themes and celebrations. Betsy's husband Martin (one of the RCYC guys) actually made a four leaf clover copper cookie cutter for St. Patrick's Day last month. Betsy is enrolled in a vegetarian cooking course at George Brown College so we are all looking forward to the results.

The Menu is a four-week rotation, printed here for you. April 2 was the beginning of Week 3.

The following is a favourite recipe.

Baked Tofu

1 lb extra firm tofu

Marinade

$\frac{3}{8}$ cup (6 tablespoons) soy sauce or tamari

$\frac{3}{8}$ (6 tablespoons) cup water

3 cloves garlic minced

1" minced of fresh ginger, peeled and grated

Cut the tofu blocks into 4- to 6-inch slices.

Mix up the marinade.

Let the tofu marinade for half an hour on an oiled cookie sheet.

Bake in the oven at 275–300°F for about 1½ to 2 hours.

(check tofu and turn)

WMCC Four-Week Menu (S = Snack, L = Lunch) NOTE: All drinking water is filtered

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
WEEK 1 S: Arrowroots, Apples, Bananas, Juice L: Lasagna–Noodles, cheese, veggie ground round, tomato sauce; Veggies–carrots, cucumbers; Cookies; Milk & water S: Granola, Oranges, Juice	S: Muffins, Oranges Juice L: Mac & Cheese–Cheese, milk, noodles; Salad–lettuce, carrots, broccoli, corn, cucumbers; Cookies; Milk & water S: Apple Sauce, Crackers, Juice	S: Yogurt, Oranges, Juice L: Soup–Barley Mushroom; Sandwiches–Whole wheat bread, cheese & cucumber, PB; veggie–carrot sticks; cookies; Milk & water S: Trail Mix, Yogurt, Juice	S: Cereal, Milk, Juice L: Perogies–broccoli, corn, peas; veggies–carrots, cucumber sticks; cheese sticks & spring rolls; chocolate peanut ribbon cookies; Milk & water S: Fruit Salad, Animal cookies, Juice	S: French Toast, Juice L: Pizza–Cheese, tomato sauce, broccoli, red peppers; Salad: lettuce, carrots, broccoli, corn, cucumbers; Corn chips; Peanut cookies; Milk & water S: Muffins, Juice
WEEK 2 S: Arrowroots, Tangerines, Juice L: Sandwiches–Cheese melts on whole wheat bread; Salad–Carrots, Red, cucumbers; Cookies; Milk & water S: Trail Mix, Tangerines, Juice	S: Muffins, Apples, Juice L: Gnocchi–noodles, cheese, tomato sauce, onions, veggie ground round, Caesar Salad–lettuce, corn croutons; Carrot Sticks; cookies S: Milk & water, Peanuts, Banana, Juice	S: Peanuts, Banana, Juice L: Pea Soup; Sandwiches–Cheese & Cucumber, PB; Cookies S: Milk & water, Arrowroots, Apples, Juice	S: Cereal, Milk, Juice L: Shepherds Pie–Potato, corn, veggie ground round; Veggie–Carrots, celery, cucumbers; Cookies S: Milk & water, Crackers & Cheese, Apples, Juice	S: Toast w PB, Apples, Juice L: Quiche–cheese, broccoli & red pepper; Salad–Lettuce, carrots, corn, cucumbers; Corn chips; Arrowroot cookies S: Milk & water; Cinnamon rolls Apples, Juice
WEEK 3 S: Pears, Apples, Juice L: Lentil Loaf; Veggies–Mashed potatoes, corn & peas; cookies, Milk & water S: Trail Mix, Tangerines, Juice	S: Arrowroots, Melon, Juice L: Chili–veggie ground round, tomatoes, kidney beans, chick peas, onions, sour cream; Veggie–Carrots, cucumber sticks; Toast or chips–cookies; Milk & water S: Banana, Crackers & Cheese, Juice	S: Yogurt, Bananas, Juice L: Lentil Soup; Sandwiches–Cheese & Cucumber, PB; Veggie–Carrot Sticks, cookies, Milk & water S: Chips & Salsa, Oranges, Juice	S: Cereal, Milk, Apples, Juice L: Mac & Cheese–Cheese, milk, noodles; Salad–lettuce, corn, cucumber; Ginger Snaps cookies; Milk & water S: PB & honey crunch bars, apples, Juice	S: Toast w/PB, Apples, Juice L: Quesadillas–Cheese, tomato sauce; Veggie–carrots, red peppers, cucumbers sticks; cookies; Milk & water S: Blueberry muffins, Juice
WEEK 4 S: Arrowroots, Apples, Bananas, Juice L: Spring rolls–bean sprouts, celery, carrots, red pepper, rice; cucumbers; Cookies; Milk & water S: Banana muffins, Yogurt	S: Arrowroots, Apples, Juice L: Pasta–noodles, cheese, tomato sauce, onions, veggie ground round; Caesar Salad: lettuce, corn croutons; Carrot Sticks; Cookies; Milk & water S: Cheese & crackers, Oranges, Juice	S: Peanuts, Oranges, Juice L: Leek & potato soup; Sandwiches–Cheese & Cucumber, PB; Veggie–Carrot Sticks; Cookies; Milk & water S: Apple sauce, Graham crackers, Juice	S: Cereal, Milk, Juice L: Rice & beans with cheese, sour cream, broccoli; Corn chips, Veggie–Carrots sticks; Cookies, Milk & water S: Granola bars, Juice	S: Mini pancakes, apples, Juice L: Spinach Squares w/cheese; Salad–lettuce, carrots, corn, cucumbers; Cookies; Milk & water S: Crackers & Cheese, Juice