

# The Giraffe

May 2009

## Calendar

Tuesday, May 12	Mander Organ Demonstration by PCCH Organist Mark Anderson
Friday, May 15	No Extended Day
Wednesday, May 20	Spring Music Programs
Friday, May 22	Extended Day to 1pm only
Monday, May 25	No School (Memorial Day)
<u>Friday, May 29</u>	<u>LAST DAY OF SCHOOL—No Extended Day</u>
Monday, June 1	June Program Begins
Tuesday, June 9	Woodmere Museum Trip 5x/week group
Thursday, June 11	Woodmere Museum Trip 3x/week group
Friday, June 19	June Program Ends
Tuesday, Sept. 8	3x & 5x/week Parent Meeting for 2009-2010 school year
Wednesday, Sept. 9	Visiting Day for 3x & 5x/week students
Thursday, Sept. 10	First Day of School for 3x & 5x/week students
Friday, Sept. 11	Playgroup Parent Meeting for 2009-2010 school year

## A Note from Margot

The wonder we see on children's faces when they see a plant sprout or a chick hatch is the wonder we feel all year long as we work with and observe your children. In each class I see children functioning well in a group, responding to friends and teachers with ease, and beaming with pleasure as they paint, build, sing, listen to a story, eat snacks, play with sand or water, work in their journals or run and climb in the playground. They do seem to love learning.

Summer brings time for parents to provide opportunities for learning and to engage children in enriching activities. You might use your environment to find ideas to motivate children to explore and learn. Talk about ordinary and extraordinary things you see, giving children as



much information as they can process and listening to their ideas and observations. Take walks to look for things of a particular color or shape, to point out signs and talk about letters or words, or to see how many you can find of a particular vehicle, animal, plant or printed word. Follow up an on-site experience with a trip to a library or museum.

Most importantly, enjoy the summer.

Many families whose children are moving on to other schools have younger children coming to PCCH Pre-K next year. We all look forward to welcoming you back. Those families of graduates who do not have younger siblings, and those who are moving, will be missed. Please keep in touch.

## Reflections—

### Boredom -A Breathe of Fresh Air - By Amy Raphael, Giraffe Editor

“I have nothing to do” - may be one of the most dreaded phrases uttered during the summer months. As parents, we spend a lot of time and money trying to avoid it. Finding the right camp, swim lessons, classes of all types, just so that our children will have something to do.

Boredom used to be an essential part of summer. “No more teachers, no more books .etc..” the song goes. It was time to explore and to do what you wanted to do without adult structure. This seems to be a point that many families are missing today. Somehow we feel the need to have our children instructed in everything—which then leaves them no time to discover how the world works, on their own terms, and perhaps their own part in it.

In January of 2007, **The American Academy of Pediatrics** published an article *By Kenneth R. Ginsburg MD, MS Ed*, which stated that “*Free and unstructured play is healthy and essential (for children)*”. What we call “Play” is really the “work” of childhood. It is through their play that children develop problem solving skills and learn best about their environment, themselves and each other.

When you think about it, most early childhood games, from *Ring around the Rosy* to *Tag*, were games created for children by children. Being a bit bored forces you to use your imagination. To make up a game you have to be able to set rules, remember the rules, explain them to others, discuss it and modify the plan until everyone is happy with it. Anyone who has watched a group of children in a playground has seen this process— it’s the same one most of us use in our own jobs and relationships.

Beyond the imaginative process there are many other things young children learn from play. Specifically, outdoor free play has a wide variety of advantages. Children can learn about physics (“how can I move this rock with this stick?”), the environment (“what is that worm doing?”), weather (“where are those clouds going?”), engineering (“when is this sand wet enough to make a castle?”), how to test their own limits (“can I jump to that next rock or will I land in the creek?”) or the luxury of just being quiet (“it feels good to rest in the shade”).

In his book *The Last Child in the Woods*, Richard Louv shows a correlation between the lack of free imaginative outdoor play and the rise in cases of ADHD and childhood obesity. Looking through today’s many catalogs of children’s toys, you’ll see building sets, sand toys of every shape, fairy houses, and many wonderfully imaginative toys. But do these things help our children play? The gift of experiential learning allows children the freedom to create their own games and toys - building with sticks and stones, using shells for shovels and seaweed for sandcastle decorations, feeling the consistency of the sand and shaping it with their own hands.

Of course we are also concerned with protecting our children from their environment (and even from themselves). We know about all the dangers of bees, snakes, West Nile virus, running with sticks, talking to strangers. How do we let them explore and still feel we’re keeping them safe? We can do it with them. Nature and play is not just good for children, it’s essential for all of us. Studies have shown that workers who can see a lovely nature setting from their work station, are more productive. Doctors say that being out in nature lowers your blood pressure. Not to mention the bonding experience you can have with a three year old when you point out the guppies swimming in that creek. . . and then try to catch one together.

So here’s to an old fashion summer— between camp and tennis lessons. Some free time in the backyard, on the beach or walking in the woods looking for bugs, making fairy houses out of sticks and leaves, or building a sand castle. We may all find it a breath of fresh air.



## The Spanish Language Corner

It has been a wonderful year of Spanish with the children at Chestnut Hill Presbyterian Preschool. Using songs and instruments we have worked on a variety of concepts and vocabulary and had a lot of fun doing it. The children have learned greetings, numbers and colors very well. They can sing their song RAPIDO and LENTO (fast and slow) and also SUAVE and FUERTE (soft and loud). This last one seemed to be their favorite (though not mine...). We have also enjoyed learning the names of animals and a variety of songs in Spanish about different topics. They really have come a long way and I am very proud of their achievements.

I am looking forward to next school year!

- Paula Rivera, Spanish Teacher

### VOCABULARIO

Brillan	<i>Shine</i>	Soñar	<i>Dream</i>	Conejo	<i>Rabbit</i>
Estrellas	<i>Stars</i>	Por Favor	<i>Please</i>	Pollito	<i>Chicken</i>
Sin parar	<i>non-stop</i>	Dame	<i>Give me</i>	Salta	<i>Jump</i>
Cielo	<i>Sky</i>	Gracias	<i>Thank you</i>		
Luna	<i>Moon</i>	De nada	<i>You're welcome</i>		
Dormir	<i>Sleep</i>	Elefante	<i>Elephant</i>		

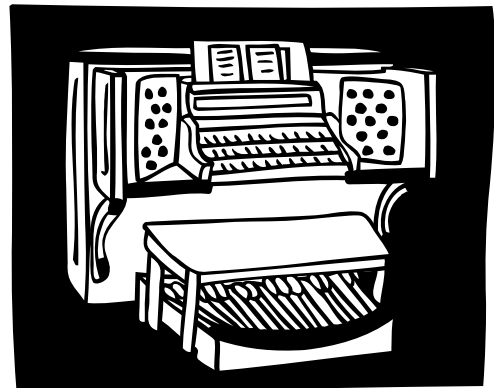
## Calendar Highlights

### Spring Musical Celebration

Save the date! The Spring Music programs will be on Wednesday, May 20th, after drop-off. Look for a flyer with specific information about each classes program. Times will be staggered slightly to accommodate our Music Teacher, Keisha— who needs to assist with each class.

### Mander Organ with Mark Anderson

On May 12th, Mark Anderson, PCCH Musical Director and Organist, pulled out all the stops (so to speak!), showing the children the many voices and dynamics of PCCH's wonderful Mander organ. Be sure to ask them about it!



## Reminders

### Mark Your Calendar

Please note on your calendar the dates for the parent meetings which start the 2009-2010 school year. At these meetings you receive important information regarding your child's new classroom and teacher. It's a great time to ask questions and get on top of a new school year. Equally important are the children's visiting days. All of which will be here before we know it!

### June Program

There is still time to register your child for our June Program. The program will last from June 1st until June 19th with each week highlighting a different theme. There will also be special activities at the Woodmere Museum for 3x and 5x week groups. Contact Margot for more information and registration forms.

For more information about connecting kids with the outdoors, try these websites:

- *Children and Nature Network* has a great resource guide— [www.childrenandnature.org](http://www.childrenandnature.org)
- *The National Wildlife Federation* - [www.nwf.org](http://www.nwf.org)

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## Happenings at the Presbyterian Church of Chestnut Hill

Look here for a listing of family friendly events happening at PCCH, including concerts, lectures, special events, and holiday services. Regular services are held **Sunday mornings at 10:00am**. Sunday School officially ends for the summer on May 30th, however, childcare will continue to be provided throughout the summer for infants and children through 4th grade..

Sunday, May 30th

Annual Spring Picnic—Following 10:00am Church Service, out on the lawn (weather permitting) or in Widner Hall. All are Welcome!

The Presbyterian Church of Chestnut Hill is an inclusive community of faith, committed to excellence in worship, music and the arts, education and outreach. More information about these events and our church community can be found on our website, <http://www.chestnuthillpres.org/>, or by calling the church office, 215-247-8855.



Have a Great Summer !

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