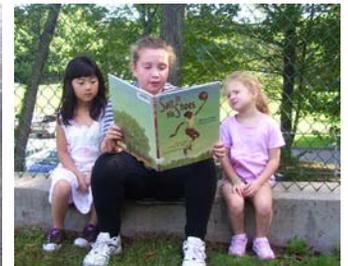


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The Calvin Hilltop



CALVIN HILL DAY CARE AND
KITTY LUSTMAN-FINDLING KINDERGARTEN



Carla's Corner

Each year it is exciting and a little anxiety producing to begin school anew. Many of us live our lives based on the school calendar -- never having left the classroom or the schoolhouse, choosing to stay and make the education and nurturing of children our life's work. It is rewarding professionally, this spending time with your children, interesting and fun. And it is a great pleasure to share your children's lives with you.

This year is off to a really good start. We have a wonderful group of 60 children (and terrific families!). There are 17 children in the Threes; 23 in the Preschool and 20 in the Kindergarten -- surely a full house! As our children move up through the school it is such a privilege to be a part of their growth and development over the years. Sixteen children "flew up" to the Kindergarten this year where they have been joined by 4 new classmates; the Preschool has 16 children who came up from the Threes, and they have been joined by 7 additional children from outside Calvin Hill; and the Threes has 7 siblings, joined by children new to the school.

However, already each group of individual's is beginning to come together nicely, and the teachers have been working hard to integrate everyone into their classroom communities. We hope all of you, whether new to Calvin Hill or just new to a classroom, are feeling a part already of the amazing larger Calvin Hill community. As the nearly 100% attendance at our All Parent meeting earlier this month showed, this is a diverse, committed and really interesting group of families, and we are delighted you are all with us.

We have some new faces this year on our staff. Marissa Bivona and Lizzy Carrick are our new Harris Fellows - Marissa in the Threes and Lizzy in Kindergarten; Ted Palenski, who many of you know as a student from the Threes program is a Seedlings Fellow in the Kindergarten; Stacey Fierro is the new assistant teacher in that classroom. It is a pleasure to have all this new energy and dedication added to our already professional and talented staff and we are glad to welcome them. They are, as are all the teachers, also working very hard!

I look forward in the coming months to continuing a dialogue with all of you. I love hanging out with young children and of course collaborating with their teachers. But another truly great source of satisfaction in the 35 years I have been doing this job is the pleasure, interest and learning that happens as I engage with you, the wonderful parents who have chosen Calvin Hill. I am always available to talk and welcome your input. Calvin Hill has changed a great deal over the years I have been at its helm, and much of that change has come from the suggestions, ideas and support of involved parents. I look forward eagerly this year to what you will all bring!

Parent Pocket

Seeking Advice: Choosing a School after Calvin Hill

When I excitedly told a Calvin Hill alum of my first child's acceptance into Calvin Hill, she responded, "That's great. But you know the saying, "After Calvin Hill, it's all down hill!" I took her comment both positively and negatively. Life is easy after Calvin Hill, because your child will love learning and know how to problem solve with the best of her future classmates. But it can also be a difficult decision to find a school that matches the teacher dedication, student driven learning, and great community of Calvin Hill.

And, yet, many parents have gone before me and you! Let's share our wisdom. If you are an alum parent of Calvin Hill or have a child who has already graduated and are willing to talk with current parents about your school choices, send us your contact information! In the next newsletter, we want to feature contact information and school choices. Current parents can reach out to discuss what different schools and experiences are like as families make decisions about applying or accepting school offers.

If you are willing to be listed as a resource, please email Kate Ott (Kathryn.ott@gmail.com) your contact information and what school choice you made following Calvin Hill.

Parent Committee Meeting

The first meeting of the Parent Committee will be held on Tuesday, October 26th at 7:30 PM, upstairs in the Kindergarten Studio. The meeting is open to all current parents. At the meeting, Peter Crumlish, Parent Committee Chair will review the calendar of events for the year and discuss new initiatives and ideas. Please, bring additional ideas or topics of discussion as well. This committee meets only a handful of times throughout the year and is a great way to get to know other parents and more of what Calvin Hill does as a community.

Work Day

On Saturday, October 16, many Calvin Hill parents pitched in to clean, rake, paint, garden and fix as needed! Led by John Bianchi, Catherine's dad from the Preschool, the parents sanded, polyurethaned tables, put the garden to bed in preparation for the winter, worked on installing computer software and fixing copy machines and generally cleaned and sanitized every floor and nook and cranny. A special thanks goes to all those who helped! The staff could never devote the loving attention and elbow grease of our amazing parent Work Day crews. FYI: the next parent Work Day is Sunday, February 6, 2011.

Traffic Update

Carla has been working with some Calvin Hill parents as well as Foote School and the neighborhood association (RENA) to get the traffic calming changes promised by the City in the spring of 2009 delivered. There has been ongoing pressure placed on the New Haven Traffic and Parking office by this consortium as well as by Yale's Health and Safety Office that Carla has involved in the effort. We will keep you posted about our progress, and may need to ask parents to become involved in either a meeting or a more concerted and active effort to put pressure on the City to make these improvements happen on Highland Street.

Preschool Teacher, Stefanie - Get Well Soon!

Stefanie Harris, a preschool teacher, recently had back surgery and is recovering well. She has been missed, though the Preschool class has enjoyed good substitutes so far.



Threes Room Update



September and October have been busy months for the Threes who seem to have adjusted gracefully to their new teachers and new friends, as well as to a whole new structure to their day. The Threes classroom is alive with curiosity, enthusiasm, and creativity.

It's easy to get a window into all of this creativity by taking a glance at children involved in dramatic play. One day the children built a house, using all the requisite tools. Then, they decided to build a playground next to the house, to complete the project. Home office anyone? Sometimes the children decide to play office and talk on the telephone and use computers. Where do they learn that? One of their favorite things to do is to play babies. Recently they made their own costumes and acted out the story Owl Babies. (The hidden agenda in this very favorite story is separation – in fact one of the owl babies repeats the refrain plaintively several times – “I want my mommy!” She does, of course, return). There is no shortage of imagination in this group.

From social studies to science, autumn has been all about acorns for the Threes class. The students collect acorns, sort them, count them, and play in the sandbox with them. They have planted some which they noticed had roots, and they are observing them closely for any changes. They also have observed the weevils who have hatched from eggs laid inside the acorns by beetles. Science is everywhere! They have made acorn shakers and used them in a neighborhood shaker parade!

The Threes have also been busy doing art by experimenting with a variety of materials, such as shaving cream, finger paints, collage, play dough, watercolors, sponges, and stamps. Getting messy hasn't deterred their artistic soul, and the students have been producing a lot of artwork.

The creative spirit continues to move through the class with a musical ring. The Threes have been learning many songs and enjoying moving their bodies to music. This group loves to sing! They moved like dinosaurs while singing “Dinosaur Rumpus”, and they moved like different animals while singing “Head to Toe”. They have experimented with making their bodies into “cradles” for rocking. Right now they are busy learning a new song called “What is your language?” and in the song's refrain they say “yes” in the many languages represented in the Threes' classroom. The Threes are definitely singing, building and growing a collage of curiosity, enthusiasm, and creativity.

In the classroom



We made acorn shakers and used them in a neighborhood shaker parade!



Acorn Parade



Preschool Update

Trip to Isa's



The Preschool students have been engaged in many thoughtful, hands-on activities. Their imaginations have blossomed. They have discovered Rock 'n' Roll and then excavated the "rocks" out. The class is rounding out the start of the school year with block building *and* team building.

The Preschoolers took their first fieldtrip to Isa Stratton's home. It was a wonderful opportunity full of wonder. The children were introduced to chickens, beehives, and a beautiful garden. One of the preschool children declared, "This is a beautiful park!" The class enjoyed a picnic under their huge oak tree and even brought back some vegetables to observe and taste. As with any Calvin Hill outing, many acorns were accumulated on the Stratton's grounds under that oak tree!

The Preschool students have also been exploring musical instruments. Preschool teacher, Colleen Hayes has shared her Djembe drum with the class, and the children took turns to play the drum and keep the beat with rhythm sticks. Coming soon is Gabriel Rodriguez' father Ruben to talk about and play his trombone. The students will then follow-up this experience with musical instruments, such as the guitar and bugle. During music time, the students have also been learning many new songs, including singing "Twinkle, Twinkle" in Spanish.



Oliver, Clare, Lejla, Gabriel F, Danielle, and Sophie sorted the rocks.



From Rock 'n Roll to rocks, the Preschool went on a rock hunt outside and collected a huge amount of rocks. Then, they buried and excavated them from the sand table, scrubbed them in the water table to see the difference in color when wet, and sorted them into groups by color and size.

Reading buddies from Ashley DeVito's fourth grade came to the Preschool to share reading experiences with us. This is an ongoing process throughout the year, enjoyed by all.

Finally, the children have enjoyed constructing group buildings with the large Hollow Blocks in the dramatic play area. The activities require cooperation and negotiation to decide what

to build and then to work together to create the intended structure. Buildings have included a train and a fire truck. Sounds like fun!

Kindergarten Update

The Kindergarteners are making the most of this year's growing season. From quiet reading spaces to bookmaking, a bit of science and some math thrown in, ideas are sprouting up and growing tall.

On their first fieldtrip of the year, the Kindergarteners visited the Foote School Community Garden, located just a little ways down Highland Street. Surrounded by the smells of the earth, they planted new relationships with reading buddies from Denise Quinn's 4th grade class. Love of reading is taking root in more ways than one. The Kindergarteners are planting literacy roots of their own with



word cans and accompanying books, where children choose their own sight words to learn and illustrate.

Back in the classroom, complex math and science problems start with the sweet bouquet of a sunflower. The Kindergarteners have spent a great deal of time trying to decide how best to measure the gigantic sunflower, donated by Calvin Hill alum Emma Kennedy. Keen eyes for observation and a hearty spirit for experimentation lead the children to use a variety of non-standard units of measurement including toilet paper rolls, tape, and strips of paper of the same length.



Don't be surprised if the Kindergarten room gives the appearance of a card-counting, dice-rolling school. In fact, it is! The children are racing against each other to fill pages with numerals 1 to 6 as their math skills grow. Soon they will use two dice, and then even three to race their numerals and add larger numbers. No work and all play, makes for a superb mathematician in this case. The children are working hard on numeral recognition and fine motor activities. They are also using pattern blocks to work on geometry based spatial skills and repeating patterns.

Rain or shine, the Kindergarteners are branching out and spreading roots. They track the weather and graph the monthly results for sunny, cloudy, and raining days. Soon, they'll be adding snow!



Our Sunflower



Reminders

Open House

Open House for Prospective Families will be Saturday, November 6, 10:00am-12:00pm.

Fall Pot Luck

Fall Pot Luck Supper for all families and staff, Sunday, November 14, 4:30-6:30 p.m.
The Yale Children's Theatre will perform!

Children's Art Calendar

It is time to start creating the annual Calvin Hill Children's Art Calendar! Patron forms for parents and friends are available as well as business forms for those who would like to support the effort. Contact the Calvin Hill office for more information and start making your mailing list for when the calendars arrive. All parents will be given 5 calendars to sell. And your children's photo and work will be featured. The cost is still \$10 each – the price hasn't gone up in years!

Get your holiday shopping done early . . .

Calvin Hill T-shirts, sweatshirts, tote bags, or baseball caps are all the rage! And if you want to send a fashionable statement from a distance, use a Calvin Hill note card (available in packs of eight with four different designs for \$10). Place your orders with Randi today!

Children's T-shirts: \$8
Adult T-shirt: \$10
Children's Hat: \$10
Adult Hat: \$10
Canvas Tote Bag: \$10

Snip...snip...

Remember to keep your box tops coming, every little bit helps. Calvin Hill participates in the Boxtops for Education program. For every boxtop we collect we receive ten cents. May not seem like a lot, but they do add up. Put your carefully trimmed boxtop in the green collection canisters located in each Calvin Hill classroom.

The Newsletter team includes Calvin Hill teachers, staff and parents from each floor who generously collect stories and pictures from the teachers and students. They are Kate Ott, Nancy Bianchi, Brian Hill, and Alison Illick. Layout and design by Kaho Terry.