



Important Dates

Saturday, May 14th 10:00am-3:00pm – End of Year Garden Party!

We want to invite everyone to join us for a wonderful day of gardening, playing in the water, sharing food, music, and fun! Friends, family, alumni, and guests are also welcome! We ask that you plan to bring some kind of food or drink to share. Here are suggested categories, but if there is something special you wanted to bring, please feel free to do so:

- Last Name A-E: Drinks
- Last Name F-M: Entrees
- Last Name N-S: Sides
- Last Name T-Z: Snacks/Sweets

In addition, we ask that you also consider bringing some of the following:

Things to Donate:

- Flowers - shade and sun
- Seeds or other Veggie plants
- Paintbrushes
- Paint Trays
- Rollers
- Gnomes, other garden decor

Tools to share:

- Rakes
- Pruning Shears
- Wheelbarrows
- Shovels
- Crow Bars
- Gloves - garden and heavy work
- Drills



The Dinosaur Lady was a huge hit!



Thursday, May 19th 7:00pm-8:30pm – Information Session

This will be our last opportunity before the summer for new families to come and ask questions and get on the wait-list. Current families are also welcome to come if you have questions about any of the new or existing programs!

Thursday, May 26th – Last Day of School!

Announcements

New Programs: Summer Camps, Toddler Age Group, Afternoons & Afterschool, Homeschoolers, Parent Support Group, Community EDU, and more! – You should have received an email with details about all of the new programs that are starting up this summer and fall. There is also now a lot more information on the website, so please check it out! We

are also still making changes and incorporating feedback from all of you, so don't hesitate to let us know what ideas you may have!

Summer Playdates – Please let us know if you have any questions regarding the summer playdates, or if you would be willing to be one of the "keepers of the key" who opens the doors on those mornings.

End of the Year – Because the end of the year is approaching, we have a few reminders for you. First, we would like to ask you to please let us know if your child will not be at school on their normally scheduled last day so that we can be sure to have a chance to say goodbye at meeting and give them their goodbye gift. We'll also be talking about the end of the year in meetings so children have a chance to express their fears and excitement about upcoming transitions. In addition, we want to invite you to come and join us for lunch on your child's last day of school to help us celebrate this wonderful year! And finally, please help us clean up the school by remembering to bring a bag to clean out your child's cubby and take home all shoes, jackets, artwork, etc!

Middle School Visitors – We will have 24 Middle School students from Watershed visiting to help us garden on May 24th!

Farmer's Market Sitters – We need people to help us man our Louisville Farmer's Market booth on June 4th, July 16th, August 13th, September 10th, and also a Boulder booth on a date in June to be determined soon. There will be fun activities to offer, such as face painting, and you can also promote your own business or craft if you'd like! Please let us know if you are interested!

Registration Paperwork – If you have not completed any of the registration paperwork for fall, please get that to us as soon as possible. You do have until August 15th to get us the Health form and Immunizations.

Legalizing Chickens – Alison Sharley (Winston's mom) is coordinating a team of people to try to get chickens legalized in Louisville, which would be great for the school and for Louisville residents! If you are interested in helping, please let her know: sharleyanne@gmail.com.

First School Updates **Spring Growth & Consensus!**

By Haley Sladek

Spring is here and the kids are wiggling like worms, digging in the dirt, planting seeds, pretending to be poisonous caterpillars and practicing consensus! This is such an exciting time of year, because of all the growth that is going on...including growth in understanding our democratic community. While eating in the common room last week, I was lucky to observe an entire group of children spontaneously practicing what it means to "agree" to something, or consent to something. The conversation started with things like, "if you like...unicorns, sunbutter sandwiches, peanut butter

sandwiches (even though we can't have them at Patchwork), worms etc. raise your hand. And during this exploration of each other's preferences, some students started noticing that there were several kids who raised their hand every time. One student ended up stopping the conversation and saying, "You know, that you only raise your hand if you agree, if you don't like something, you don't have to raise your hand." After this clarification, the preferences progressed even to some more "controversial" topics like, if someone likes Batman OR Spiderman raise your hand and no I won't mention what they ended up deciding on with that one...



Butterflies, birds, and superheroes!



Our caterpillars are preparing to transform.

Metamorphosis to Memories

By Michele Leonard

The school is fluttering with excitement over our five new Patchwork pets. We will be watching over five Painted Lady caterpillars while they take their journey to becoming beautiful Painted Lady butterflies. The excitement surrounding these small creatures has led to many amazing offerings including drawings, paintings, butterfly houses and caterpillar searches. Many children had a discussion about where they think the best location for the Butterfly Garden Habitat should be once the caterpillars have formed their chrysalises. They were very contemplative over the best spot, so that we could closely observe the butterflies and also keep them safe

from being bumped or disturbed. We have also been doing caterpillar research and drawings to learn about the process of metamorphosis, so that we will be fully informed once the process begins. The caterpillars have also performed a surprising service as our new school counselor, as some children have gone into the office to "tell all the caterpillars" about their pressing issues and concerns. One also told them, "you are good butterflies," and I imagine also good listeners.

Elementary School Updates

Natural Egg Dyeing



By Brooke Bell
With the Easter holiday soon approaching, we decided to experiment with dyeing eggs with common items, rather than the conventional kits found in stores. The children were very excited to see if the items I brought – a cabbage, canned beets, and coffee – would actually

color the eggs. We quickly discovered that the cabbage water did not dye the eggs, but that the coffee turned them light brown and the beets turned them pink. The children took dyeing to the next level by experimenting with double dyeing, coloring half one color and the other another, and wanted to see how a tea would compare to the coffee. The children learned that everyday items can be used creatively, and that a cup of coffee can serve more than the purpose of keeping their parent awake! We discussed how the color deepened if the egg were left in the water longer, how when an egg cracks the lines create a design on the egg, and Sean demonstrated Archemiedes principle with an egg and the water it displaced. It was a morning filled with mathematics, science, and creative design.

Treasure Hunt

By Sean Allen

Monday the 18th of April was the long-awaited treasure hunt at Patchwork Elementary, complete with riddles, puzzles, clues, maps and a "sword" fight with the pirate captain at the end. The treasure hunt was created as a sort of cumulative review of all of the things we did over the year. For the first part of the treasure hunt, the riddle/puzzle section, the children were divided into

three teams, with each team being given specific challenges that worked with the specific areas of interest of the members of each team. One thing that happened that was not anticipated was that teams collaborated on many of the challenges and helped each other. At the mid-point of the game, all three teams had to go to the Trading Post to buy and trade for items that they needed to enter and navigate the Deep Dark Underground (the basement), which was the scene of the most challenging puzzles and the secret hiding place of the treasure. Downstairs, there was a door sealed with tape that required scissors to get through, and a large room filled with yarn that was the Spider's Lair. All of the light switches were taped up, making the room completely pitch black; a flashlight was needed to be able to navigate the rooms. The Spider's Lair held the final clues and keys to get into the last room, the Skull Room. The final part of the treasure hunt consisted of me (Sean) jumping out as the pirate captain in the Skull Room, and handing the treasure off to Christy to run into the gym. Christy dropped the treasure on the landing outside on the stairs, with the children right on her heels, and she had to try to collect as much of it up as possible with them all grabbing it at the same time. I don't think Elizabeth and I have laughed that hard in a very long time. Christy did manage to collect up most of it and lock it up, setting up a final confrontation between the children and the pirate captain for the key. After the children defeated the pirate captain with their swords,



they got to enjoy the treasure, and each one got to pick a crystal or other item to take home.

Staff: Summer & Beyond

Sean Allen

This has been a great year at Patchwork for me; I feel



very lucky and blessed to be a part of this community. Looking back, I have many reflections, and think fondly of the

connections and relationships I had the opportunity to explore with the children, other teachers, and parents. I really enjoyed getting the chance to become a part of the children's lives this year, both at the elementary school and at the first school. It was great fun to both share materials that I find fascinating, such as rocks, crystals, minerals, robots, pirates, and stories, and create provocations, whether it was with the tires, blocks, money or legos (depending on which school) for the children to see how they would respond. This summer, I plan on assisting Elizabeth in June when she goes to Puerto Rico to help set up a new school based on democratic education with our friends there. I am excited to attend the 8th annual Alternative Education and Resource Organization Conference in Portland, Oregon from August 4-7. I will also be spending time this summer finishing massage school and getting my certificate, and may also help with the Patchwork Summer Camp, be sure to check that out! Next year, I will be focused on working with the 5-7 year age group, but will be working with other age groups as well, and I am looking forward to getting another opportunity to work with many of the children I have gotten to know this year. May you all have a wonderful summer!

Sally Anderson

Wow, what a wonderful place to do my internship for this year! I have learned so much about co-teaching, communication and the overall philosophy of The Patchwork School, and subsequently my appreciation has deepened for the amazing work that this school and the community continues to do. I can't seem to get enough of Patchwork, and I will be returning next year as a part time teacher with the yellow group at the first school. This summer I will be working at Bliss on Pearl Street in Boulder as well as traveling to El Paso, Texas and Nicaragua with the INVST program for a service-learning trip. We will be staying with host families and learning about immigration issues and the effects of globalization. Hopefully I will also be able to squeeze in a white water rafting trip and lots of camping and hiking! Hope you have a lovely summer and see you in the fall!

Elizabeth Baker



At the close of our fourth school year, I feel a lot of gratitude for this community, and excitement

for the next phase of our growth! I will be returning to

Patchwork next year as the Director of Development, and will continue to have several mornings per week as a floating director/teacher with the children. I'm looking forward to growing our community's presence in Louisville and really hoping to welcome chickens to Patchwork in the fall! This summer I will be consulting with Nuestra Escuela in Puerto Rico on the creation of their new early childhood and elementary program, presenting at the IDEC in Devon, England, and presenting with Michele at the AERO conference in Portland, OR. I also look forward to a few opportunities for hiking, camping and working in my own little garden at home.

Michele Beach

Once again it is hard to believe that the year is coming to an end. It has been a transitional year for me, and I have thoroughly enjoyed getting back to school more full-time. I will, of course, be returning as the Director of



Operations, again this fall, and am looking forward to teaching five mornings again! I'm also excited that Alex will be enrolling in our new Toddler program – the "Patchwork baby" has grown up so fast, and he has really enjoyed getting to be a part of the community. As for this summer, I'll be working at school part-time in the office and helping with the summer camps, I'll also be presenting with Elizabeth at the AERO conference in Portland in August, going camping in Steamboat Springs with my siblings and their families in July, and spending time with my family at home!

Brooke Bell



I have thoroughly enjoyed working with the elementary children and teachers this year. Among my favorite memories are making

apple crisp from the apple tree in the backyard, constructing creatures out of recycled materials,

performing magic tricks for the First School, and the many morning meetings that included sophisticated and silly conversations. This summer I am planning on being at the pool as much as possible, working in our community garden, and enjoying dinners out on our back porch. My planned trips include going to WI to visit with family and attending the AERO conference in Portland, OR at the end of summer. Next year I will be staying home with Emerson and Clay, and I anticipate being busy with all that they bring to my life. I hope everyone enjoys a summer hopefully filled with relaxation, family, and warm weather outings.

Laura Daniels

It is with great joy that I write to you to introduce myself to your community as we commence our adventure into education of children ages 18 months to 30 months at the Patchwork School. Looking back over the years that have led me to you in this moment, I see that my path was leading here all along. I am the mother of three beautiful children; James celebrated 11 spins around the sun this past November, Willow was 6 in January, and Cyrus turned 2 in February. I have learned so much from my kids, and from the other children who have graced my days. Through parenting I have been enlightened by attachment parenting, Nurtured Heart, Piaget, Dewey, Howard Gardner, Countryside Montessori, a small village in Italy called Reggio Emilia, and finally Democratic Education and the Patchwork School. My undergraduate education was focused on a combination of Social Sciences with concentrations in the Fine Arts and Natural Sciences. Through college I had worked as an assistant teacher in the early childhood program at my university, and after college I taught Middle School Science. I derived much joy and satisfaction from the work of educating young people. And so I began my Masters in Arts Education in hopes of returning to the work of education. This past year, I was grateful to have the opportunity to work as the Program Director at a small Reggio Emilia Program for One and Two year-old children in the Washington DC area. This experience cemented my desire to continue down the path of Early Childhood Education. I knew of Patchwork and was inspired by their [vision](#). And I also wanted to return home to Colorado. So, together we worked to envision a toddler center at Patchwork that would be filled with discovery and delight. I am very happy to continue my life-long learning journey with the great educators at the Patchwork School as the Program Director for the new toddler center. I look forward to meeting each and every one of you.

Amanda Easton

This summer I plan to spend a lot of time with my children – it's been a really busy year for me and I can't wait to slow the pace a little. I will also be taking a few

masters classes at UCD and working with AERO. Next year I will be looking forward to spending a couple of days a week at the Patchwork afterschool program and substituting as well. I may also be homeschooling my son, Denzel, and helping my older son, Dalton, navigate his senior year and make decisions for post high school life! This has been an amazing year full of insight and growth! I love, love, love being with children and find most of these insights and moments of growth come when I am interacting with them or reflecting on my time with them!



Isaac Graves

I have found such joy this year in teaching at



Patchwork. I have had so many wonderful experiences and really enjoyed forming new relationships with you and your children. This summer, I will be

continuing my national work towards making schools and other learning environments like Patchwork available to all children. This includes organizing an international conference held in Portland, Oregon that will attract hundreds of families and individuals passionate about learner-centered education. After I wrap up this work in August, I will be taking on an even larger role at the school, working a couple full days a week with the blue group and a couple days a week in the new afternoon program. I will also continue to serve on the board of directors. I feel so blessed that I've been able to teach this year, as my time spent with the children has filled me with happiness and hope.

Michele Craig Leonard (Mitch)

It is such a tremendous pleasure to be a part of The Patchwork family. I have loved learning alongside all of your marvelous children!!! We have shared so many joys, sorrows and achievements together this year. Just like our Painted Lady Butterflies, we have the summer to show our colors and explore the world. This summer I will be continuing the journey of getting my Masters in Educational Psychology and will be taking several classes at CU Denver. I am really looking forward to attending



the IDEA conference in Portland Oregon and also making my way to many local music festivals and camp-outs. My husband and I are excited to have time this summer to honeymoon and relax as newly-weds. HUGE thank you to everyone for the gifts, words of wisdom, and wonderful support surrounding our

marriage last March!! The generosity displayed to us by this community has been touching. Next school year I will be working as a teacher with the infant and toddler age group. I am really looking forward to working with Laura Daniels and our new youngest students!! I look forward to seeing everyone around town or at school next year! I hope you all have wonderful summer vacations!

Christy Lochary



I have really enjoyed the community we have formed this year with the elementary school. We have had a year of interesting investigations and explorations. I look forward to continuing next year as the project director of the Afternoon Program at Patchwork. I am excited about this program because it opens our school to the community,

involving children from other schools and homeschoolers too! I will also be the Co-Director of CommunityEDU, a new project we are starting in order to strengthen our ties in the Patchwork community and in the community of Louisville as well. This summer I will be helping plan the 8th annual Alternative Education Resource Organization Conference in Portland Oregon and helping facilitate the two summer camps at The Patchwork School. I will also be attending a conference in Road Island, for educators across the nation called, Free Minds, Free People. Along with all of this I hope to get in some gardening time and a lot of biking too!

Haley Sladek



As I look back on the school year, I feel very lucky to have worked with your children and the Patchwork community; we all have grown so

much! I am also excited to continue working at The Patchwork School – next year I will be working full time at the school wearing several hats. As far as teaching, I will primarily be working with the 2.5-5 year olds, with one day a week working with the toddlers with Laura. A new position that I will be taking on next year is being the Communications Coordinator/Administrative Assistant, which will allow me to build on the nonprofit work I did this school year, as well as to become even more familiar with the logistical aspects of the school. Until then, during the summer, I will be busy conducting interviews for my Masters thesis, tutoring, working at Barnes & Noble and traveling to various education conferences (St. Paul- Education Circle of Change, England- International Democratic Education Conference, Portland- AERO Conference). Enjoy the Colorado sunshine and see you in August!



Melissa (Hank's mom) reads about worms before the children help create the "Worm Hotel." So many parents helped this year with offerings, materials, projects, meals, and so much more! We want to thank everyone for a wonderful year – we really couldn't have done it without you. We feel so fortunate to have such an amazing parent community! Have a wonderful summer!

First day of school 2011-2012 is August 22nd!