



**OCTOBER 2011 NEWSLETTER**

**MARYLHURST**  
Early Childhood Center



**WELCOME**

Welcome to the cycle of the school year. Already in each classroom, routines are beginning to develop and grow, the beauty of students' art has begun to replace bare walls, and our once quiet classrooms have begun to fill with laughter, problem negotiations, and moments of discovery.

Using every resource available, our teachers work tirelessly to create a culture of thinking and learning for all levels of experience. At every level, we use our classrooms to make our students' thinking visible to themselves and to teachers, because only in doing so can our children come to understand what thinking really is and how it is done. Children engage fully in play, all the while being observant and watchful. They consider ideas thoughtfully and carefully, and each day the teachers reflect with the children, and each other, on the learning that took place in the classroom. It is through this reflection that we understand the strengths and challenges that the teachers and the children begin to share together. It is through these thoughtful reflections that the teachers begin to build curricula to reinforce the importance of making meaning together.

We want our children to experience school as a welcoming place where everyone is involved in learning, a place where all adults and children are held to similar expectations, and a place that is committed to bringing out the best in everyone. Only then do children live the value that school is not something that is "done" to them but a place where they join a community of learners who will develop the courage to one day remake the world.

I look forward to our journey together this year. My door is always open to you and all your comments, questions, and concerns. To all Marylhurst children and their families, whether new or returning to our community – welcome! Each year we feel more grateful for the privilege of spending our days with your children.

*Sheila Walker*

Director

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## Calendar

### OCTOBER

- ▶ 20<sup>th</sup>: **"The Race to Nowhere"** 7pm in the Barclay Theater. A must see, childcare will be available to MECC families.
- ▶ 21<sup>st</sup>: Dine out for Marylhurst! Enjoy dinner with your family at **Sweet Tomatoes** between 5pm-8pm. 20% of the proceeds will come back to Marylhurst!!
- ▶ 30<sup>th</sup>: Visit the MECC table at the "Spooky Stroll" at Tanner Creek Park in West Linn at 3:00pm.
- ▶ 31<sup>st</sup>: Teacher In-Service. No classes except for Two's program. They will have regular schedule all week.

### NOVEMBER

- ▶ 1-4<sup>th</sup>: Fall Conferences-No classes for older children. Twos class will run as usual.
- ▶ 5<sup>th</sup>: School Work Party. Inside and Out. 9:00-1:00
- ▶ 1<sup>st</sup>: Tuition Payment Due
- ▶ 11<sup>th</sup>: Veterans' Day/No School
- ▶ 14<sup>th</sup>: Board Meeting
- ▶ 15<sup>th</sup>: Tuition Payment must be at MECC to avoid tuition late fees.
- ▶ 23-25<sup>th</sup>: Thanksgiving Break/No School.



### SERVICE HOURS

We want to thank you for all the service hours many of you have already contributed to our community! Please remember to track your service hours in the binder housed in the office. Each family has a page in the binder so they can keep track of all the wonderful time they have donated to our school. Thank you!!!

### A SWEET DEAL FOR OUR SCHOOL!!!!

On October 21st Marylhurst has the opportunity to be part of a *sweet* fundraiser! Sweet Tomatoes restaurant in Clackamas will donate 20% of sales generated by our organization back to our school.

You must bring a Sweet Tomatoes flyer with our school name on it with you when you purchase food at the restaurant. These flyers are available in the MECC office. Please take the flyer, your family, your friends, your relatives, your soccer team, anyone your can think of, to enjoy a wonderful dinner at Sweet Tomatoes on October 21st from 5:00-8:00.

With each food purchase you must have a flyer, be it a group or individual. You must also purchase a beverage with every meal. Grab another family from our community and join us for this tasty fundraiser at:

**Sweet Tomatoes**  
**13011 SE 84th Ave., Clackamas, Or**

### AND LIKE A GOOD NEIGHBOR

Our school is surrounded by some wonderful neighbors who look after our building and grounds when we are not here. Please help us continue to build positive relationships with them by being considerate when parking your car. Please do not block driveways, alleys, mailboxes, or garbage cans. Also, please do not pull up on the curb and park on their grass. We very much appreciate your thoughtfulness regarding this matter.

While we are on the topic of parking, please be sure to have your car OUT of the back parking lot by 9:30 in the morning. This the time that we close the gates and the parking lot becomes the playground for the children.





## FALL CONFERENCES

We will be having our fall conferences the week of Nov. 1-4<sup>th</sup>. On Monday, October 31<sup>st</sup>, the faculty will be together for an all day In-Service, presented by MECC Board President Amy Stoeber. The only classes that will meet on their regular schedules will be the Two's classes: Crickets, Grasshoppers, and Ladybugs. All other classes will run on the conference schedule designed by your child's teachers. We ask that the meeting time with your child's teachers be with parents only. This is a wonderful time to hear about your child without him or her sitting nearby. It is a time for the teachers to share all the wonderful things your child is doing as well as looking at goals for everyone for the rest of the year.

Teacher Kim will be providing child care in the "Bee Hive" Tuesday-Thursday from 12-5 PM. Child care is \$6.50 per hour with 5% sibling discount on the second child for families who schedule care. Child-care forms are available in the office to reserve your spot now. Child care is billed for a one hour minimum.

Heather Spicer, an MECC Board member and parent volunteer coordinator, has also arranged for child care to be provided in the gym by parent volunteers. This child care will be available before the Bee Hive is open. Parent volunteers will be available to provide child care in the gym from 9-12:00 Tue.-Fri.

## OUR NEW FACULTY

We want to offer the warmest of welcomes to our three new faculty members! Nancy Downes-Le Guin, Jeff Kirschmann, and Pam Rivers. Nancy has been at MECC as a parent for the last two years with her son, Chip. Nancy has a teaching background and we are thrilled to have her as the Teacher Aide in the Owls class. Jeff Kirschmann has also been with us as a parent for the past several years with both of his sons, Keeghan and Keller. Jeff has a background in education, and he brings a wonderful energy to the Robins class as a Teacher Aide. Pam Rivers is new to our community and we are pleased to have her warm, nurturing presence. Pam too has spent many years working in schools and brings a wealth of experience as a Co-Teacher in the Squirrels classroom.

We also feel very fortunate to have two returning Clackamas Community College students working with us as they complete their practicum teaching. Hanna Mears is teaching in the Raccoons class with teachers Elizabeth and Shawna while practicum student Britney Tompkins is teaching with Teacher Kim in the Bee Hive. Both Hanna and Britney are also substitute teaching when needed.

Please give a warm welcome to all of these wonderful new teachers in the MECC community! We are very excited to have all this fresh energy among us.

# WELCOME!



## FACEBOOK

Facebook has over 750 million users, almost one seventh of the species! Marylhurst Early Childhood Center is now one of those users. Updates, bulletins, and photographs are posted regularly. You're already on Facebook, and we want to connect with you! This way we can share links, like [racetonowhere.com](http://racetonowhere.com), the website of the documentary film on academic pressure showing at MECC on October 20! Best of all, it's a two-way interaction! You can post to our "wall" and tag us in photographs. We already have photo albums of the grounds and halls, but we are still working on pictures of the different classrooms and events. Do you have great photos you can share with us to make our page even more special? "Like" us on Facebook and stay in touch today! Parents, on the authorization form you turned in at the beginning of the year you checked a box authorizing MECC to use your child's picture, or not. We will honor this request when posting pictures on our Facebook page.

## SCRIP



Did you know that when you patronize businesses from Fred Meyer to Nike you can benefit MECC? You can! Scrip is an exciting partnership between prominent local businesses and the Tigard-Tualatin School District, of which our school is a part. When you fill out a form at our school indicating how much you plan to spend at which businesses, you will receive gift cards from those businesses in exactly the amounts you chose. Your expenditure is the same as it would have been otherwise, but the difference to the school is very big! Gift cards ordered on Mondays will be available on Thursdays. Our new scrip volunteer is Mice father Robert Peate, who will be available to show you the choices and take your orders every week this school year. Every little bit adds up, and MECC can receive thousands of dollars in donations if you take the time to do this today. Please do--it doesn't cost you more than your time to fill out a form, but it means a great deal in supplies and enrichment to your child. Let your money do even more for your school!

## SCHOLASTIC BOOKCLUB



Hello! My name is Cate Huang (a proud Frog mom), and I will be helping with the Scholastic book orders this year. At the beginning of every month, catalogs are placed inside your child's pocket. Along with each catalog, you will find an instruction sheet with a due date. I strongly encourage you to take some time to look them over. You will find many wonderful books that would open up your child's world (and likely yours as well).

You can place your order by dropping off the order sheets and payment at the front office, or you can place your order online at [scholastic.com/bookclubs](http://scholastic.com/bookclubs). The books you order will earn MECC points to purchase more books for the classrooms and library. With each online order, the school gets an additional free book!!

Reading to your children not only stimulates brain development, it builds a closer emotional relationship between you. As Dr. Seuss puts it, "The more that you read, the more things you will know. The more that you learn, the more places you'll go." So let me invite you and your children to embark on a wonderful journey to all the places you can go.





Hey Parents! Amy Sandie here, with the first edition of the Healthy Eating for Kids column. As a disclaimer, I am not a nutritionist, but I am an avid reader of books and websites concerning healthy eating. I am obsessed with reading labels on pre-packaged food. I am also a home cook, always experimenting with recipes to make them healthier. Now for a little background information: my twins, Liam and Elsa, were born three months premature. I couldn't give them their nine months, but I have been adamant about providing them with the healthiest choices. I am a true believer that good nutrition will help their growing bodies and brains now and that learning good habits will help them make healthy food choices in the future. In our family, we try many, many new foods and recipes. Sometimes they are hits, and sometimes it takes some repeat attempts to "grow on them". I'm about to get on my soap box, so bear with me and hopefully I can help with the maze of foods parents encounter to help make better choices for our little ones. This month, my focus is on snacks that we bring in to MECC. From our parent handbook (or the MECC website) comes the advice that we bring snacks that:

...represent at least two of the four major food groups. To support our efforts to instill good eating habits, we ask that you bring nutritious, non-sugary snacks. The following are some snack suggestions:

- Non-sugar cereals with milk
- Bagel and cream cheese (mini-bagels are great)
- Vegetables and dip
- String cheese
- Crackers and cheese
- Sandwiches
- Fruit and Yogurt

This is a great start, but with sneaky manufactures, what seems healthy is often

not. For example, yogurt is transformed by some brands into a green or bright pink goo, loaded with fillers like gelatin, sugar, artificial colors and flavors. Graham crackers (wholesome, right?) might contain partially hydrogenated oils and preservatives. Out-of-season fruits are often grown outside the U.S. and may contain harmful pesticides that aren't even allowed for use in our country--but this is a topic unto itself.

On my quest to provide healthy food for my family, I was greatly inspired by author Michael Pollan. Pollan has written several books on food choices, and he has three simple rules for healthy eating: *eat food; not too much; mostly plants*. This month, I'd like to focus on his first rule: eat food. Pollan advocates eating *food*, whole food, as much as possible. Fresh, in-season produce is best, followed by frozen, then canned. If you do buy processed foods, he has some helpful hints to make better, healthier choices. First, look for items with fewer ingredients and ingredients that your grandmother would recognize. In other words, buy items with *real* food ingredients, not chemistry experiments.

Second, be aware of key items like hydrogenated or partially hydrogenated oils, added sugars, artificial colors, preservatives, and artificial flavors. The hydrogenated stuff is particularly bad—even worse for little and big bodies alike than the butter it was intended to replace in processed foods. Be aware too, that manufacturers have gotten off easy in that they can claim that a food product is Trans-Fat Free on the label *if* it has fewer than .5 grams of trans fat *per serving*. However—and this is the tricky part—many, many people eat more than one serving. Partially hydrogenated oils ARE trans fats, so if it's in the ingredient list, it's best to avoid it, as no trans fat is good for our little ones. On the artificial colors front, several countries—but not ours—have banned commonly used artificial colors due to links with certain



diseases. Anyway, why do kids need fish shaped crackers artificially colored bright red and green?!

Other ingredients to be careful of are added sugars, as kids just don't need them. For example, just that something is called a granola bar doesn't mean it's healthy! A recent after-sport snack for my older daughter included a granola bar from Trader Joe's. Looking at the label and reading the ingredients, it was no better nutritionally than a candy bar. Sugars are sneaky, too, as they come in even "healthy"-sounding forms like rice syrup, tapioca syrup, and natural sugar cane. Sure, they may be slightly better than high-fructose corn syrup, but sugar is still sugar and needs to be eaten in moderation. Yogurt is another food that is often loaded with sugar, so read, read, read those food labels and choose low-fat or non-fat versions with fewer grams of sugar.

Things to look for in products: whole grains! If you are buying snack products like bagels or crackers make sure that whole grains are first on the list. Note: it must list *whole* wheat flour or 100% whole wheat flour, not just wheat flour, to qualify! Those clever manufacturers often mislead consumers by listing wheat flour (most flours in processed

foods are made with wheat flour), but it's the *whole* wheat that provides additional fiber, vitamins, and protein to help our kids grow. "Multigrain" is another tricky term from manufacturers, but again if you read the label, often you'll find that wheat flour, not *whole* wheat flour, is the first ingredient on the list. It's best to find products with 100% whole grain on the packaging or whole grains like whole wheat, oats, brown rice, etc., as the first several ingredients. This is all a bit daunting I know, but there are several good brands, like *Kashi*, that make snack products that are actually better for you!

So to sum it up—bring in snacks that are made of whole foods like fruits (preferably ones in season) and veggies, healthy yogurts with less sugar and without added color or artificial flavors, and healthy crackers with 100% whole grains, 100% whole grain low-or-no-sugar cereal, 100% whole grain bagels or pita, cheese, all natural hummus, and small sandwiches using healthy ingredients. These are good options. Avoid chemistry experiments, hydrogenated and partially hydrogenated oils, excessive sugar, and items with artificial colors/flavors.

Finally, empower yourselves by reading those labels—it's often a bit surprising, as many foods that masquerade as "healthy" aren't!



October 2011

# Two Healthy Snack Recipes



## to try at home

### Breakfast Cookie Bars:

Easy, filled with whole grains and yummy! Great for breakfast on the run or a snack. Taste-tested by Mara, Liam, and Elsa Sandie

2 cups rolled oats

1 ½ cups whole wheat flour or whole wheat pastry flour

1 cup apple juice

¼ cup wheat germ or flax seed meal

½-1 cup dried fruit like currants, blueberries, apples (optional)

¾ teaspoon cinnamon

6 tablespoons brown sugar (can be decreased or even omitted, especially if using dried fruit)

½ teaspoon salt

½ cup vegetable oil

- 1) Preheat oven to 375 degrees. Grease a 9 x 13 baking pan.
- 2) Combine all ingredients in a bowl and mix well.
- 3) Transfer mixture to the prepared pan and distribute as evenly as possible, patting the batter into place with your hands,
- 4) Bake for 30 minutes. Cut into squares when hot, but don't remove from pan until they are completely cool or they will crumble.

Preparation time: 10 minutes, 30 minutes to bake

Yield: 15-20 depending on size

### Easy Hummus

from **The Complete Cooking Light Cookbook (2001)**

Even our picky eaters usually love this tasty dip! Taste-tested by Mara, Liam, and Elsa Sandie.

2 15-ounce cans chickpeas

3 small garlic cloves (can be decreased or omitted according to taste)

¼ cup plus 1 tablespoon tahini (sesame-seed paste)

¼ cup fresh lemon juice

3 tablespoons water

1. Drain chickpeas, reserving ¼ cup liquid, set aside.
2. Drop garlic through food chute with food processor on; process 10 seconds. Add chickpeas, reserved ¼ cup liquid, tahini, lemon juice, and water; process 3 minutes or until smooth scraping bowl if needed.

Spoon into serving bowl and serve immediately or cover and chill. Great with whole wheat pita or raw veggies.



My daughter, Sophia, a graduate of MECC, entered the world of public education this fall. We shed some tears over the summer, over both the loss of MECC and the wonderment of what next steps would hold. When you move through the educational hands of Marylhurst, its meadow creatures, and the inspiring teachers that shape your child's life, it's hard not to ponder the educational future of your child. I wondered over the summer what a graduate of Marylhurst looked like in the public-school sector. It didn't take long to find out:

**Example 1: Meet and Beat** – A week before school began, Sophia's school had a “meet-and-greet” at which we could all wander in, meet her teacher, and visit the classroom. The classroom visit was successful, and we then wandered out to the playground to celebrate a successful start. Soon thereafter, Sophia was knocked off a zipline after being clocked with the elbow of a 4<sup>th</sup> grader. Many tears (followed by a black eye) later, Sophia explained that she was not saddened by the injury itself. In her words, “Mommy, my eye got really hurt, but he didn't even stop. He didn't even offer me an ice pack or ask if I was all right.” At MECC, the whole child is taught: teachers use incidental learning opportunities to instill a community of friends—people you take care of when injured, either physically or emotionally. Sophia knew this; that's a Marylhurst kid!

**Example 2: Zip It!** - A few weeks into school, Sophia made an observation. A table mate at school has autism. She pointed out that he rocks, spits, and talks to himself. She also pointed out that another table mate referred to him as “gross”. Over bedtime rituals, Sophia unfolded this story to me and discussed that agreeing with her peer would make her a “bystander”, which was clearly unacceptable to her. We problem-solved some ideas about how to deal with both table mates, and she seemed consoled. The next day, Sophia came home and said, “Today my friend said

that 'Joe' is gross again. I told her everyone is gross sometimes. Maybe we should keep those thoughts on the inside so that we don't hurt Joe's feelings. Just zip it!” Recognizing the concepts of friendship, advocacy, and the bystander effect? That's a Marylhurst kid!

Sophia is not a special case here, nor is she without missteps; I simply didn't want to get releases from all of the Marylhurst parents whose children I have watched over the last years on various playgrounds and at birthday parties. But I see them, and I am amazed when I observe the first friends, advocates, justice-seekers, problem-solvers, and buddies that make up who we are. Marylhurst is creating good human beings, not simply teaching students. Our faculty practice what is developmentally appropriate while meeting kids right where they are and with what they need on a daily basis. They use curriculum that teaches the whole child while following his or her lead. It's an amazing process to watch unfold in children literally right before my eyes. And to see this progress as they move into a greater social sphere is inspiring.

Regarding Marylhurst graduates, the board and the faculty continue to thoughtfully plan as we move toward expansion. Our goal is to expand Marylhurst to include an elementary program by the fall of 2012. We are discussing meaningful curriculum and having rich conversations about what an elementary school would look like as a natural extension of our wonderful preschool. And I'm curious about what a primary school student who is a product of our environment and curriculum would look like. Aren't you?

Amy Stoeber  
MECC Board President  
Mice class mom to Jack





# The Kindergarten Class



We in the Kindergarten class are a community of explorers. This year's underlying theme is Journeys, both real and imagined. The Kindergarten at Maryhurst has a two-year rolling curriculum that allows children to learn deeply and to engage critically at each developmental phase. Next year's theme will be Inventions and Discoveries.

Before the children walk into the classroom for the first time we are building our class community. Several books are shared reading, there is a common assignment, and the children each receive a special little wee person in the mail. In accordance with this year's theme, the children created a vehicle from found material that allowed their wee friend to travel in a big person's world. The children mailed a postcard to the school describing an adventure they had shared with their new friend. These postcards were part of their new class space, welcoming and familiar, as they arrived on first-day visits. Community-building continued with the shared creation of class guidelines, an examination of the Aesop fable "Father and Sons", and the practiced skill of compliments. We in the Kindergarten class are always on the lookout for random acts of kindness and good deeds. The children become quite skilled at recognizing these important qualities in others and in themselves.



As the oldest children in the school, the Kindergarteners at MECC take on a unique set of responsibilities. They organize the first all-school event, the Harvest Festival. At MECC, kindergarteners

are older buddies instead of younger buddies as at many other schools. They are examples of leadership on the playground, intentional in their play, and mindful of the example they set. This

allows the child of five or six to practice qualities of character and leadership deeply.

**Science:** We have begun the year with a look at the scientific method. The children will gain a deep understanding of this as the foundation for their explorations on a variety of journeys. Each child



was given a Moon book to take home on the day of the New Moon. They are tracking the Moon's phases as it journeys from New to Full and then back to New on October 27<sup>th</sup>. While the Moon has been elusive of late, the children are excited to report sightings and share what they have observed. This too is good practice,

learning to look closely at something so far away and begin to think about the familiar in new and unusual ways. In class the children are beginning a study of the rock cycle, acting as the Earth herself in creating sedimentary, igneous, and metamorphic rock forms.

**Math:** We began the year with an examination of pattern, focusing initially on simple repeating patterns such as AB, ABC and AABB. Using unifix cubes to create these patterns in groups of ten allowed the children to demonstrate their skills with both numeracy and with pattern building. The children then examined the attribute of color, examining each unifix cube and comparing its color to a natural material found in the garden. Several math periods were spent happily collecting and sorting flowers, leaves, sticks, and twigs then building a variety of patterns. To move beyond color as an attribute for creating a repeating pattern the children were challenged to create a pattern using materials that shared an attribute--think pennies. They also brainstormed an attribute rubric that could be used when making a pattern. We took a pattern walk around the neighborhood to introduce them to the idea that patterns exist all around them. They were so excited by this discovery that they each documented a pattern



they found in their daily lives to add to the class pattern wall. As part of our shared math work they are learning the power of zero, how to write the digits 0 to 9 using an efficient stroke order, and how to glean pertinent information from a story problem. This practice allows the children to create solid foundations of problem-solving skills. As Albert Einstein stated, “The formulation of a problem is often more essential than its solution, which may be merely a matter of mathematical or experimental skill.” We recently started “Triangle Workshop” as a means to introduce growing patterns and as a way to examine this important geometric shape. Ask a Kindergarten child how many triangles are in a trapezoid or a hexagon, and if you add two hexagons together how many triangles that equals. They can also tell you what the root “tri” means.



**Literacy:** As this year’s theme is Journeys, we are immersed in the classic elements that make up a journey. They have used their summer reading of *Rosie’s Walk* and *Sally’s Great Balloon Adventure* to ground their journey research. The children started with creating a home place in the garden, using their wee person as the main character. Recently, they have been focused on the concept of a villain and the idea that every journey begins with a “call”, or what drives the main character to leave her or his home. Villains are being created out of clay. The children are learning to shape and mold three-dimensional characters and then photograph them in black and white.

As part of our on-going Story Workshop, and to integrate reading into the daily fabric of Kindergarten life, we have focused on “at” as the root of many common words. Story Workshop has been set up to deepen this exploration with rats, cats, bats, and hats. The children have been asked to go back to the same story prompts in order to deepen their understanding of the arc of a story. We have introduced them to the Author’s Chair. This is an opportunity for a writer to read a story and to ask the assembled audience of writers for suggestions and/or compliments. We are learning

to listen to a story as a way to connect and share, to offer compliments in support of each other, to ask for what is needed, and to learn that we can inspire one another. Each day, after lunch, the children settle on the rug with their book bags and quietly read to themselves or with a friend. This time gives us a chance to read individually with each child, within the context of the day, supported by the books they love to share.

**Theme:** This is a time when deep work is done related to our current unit of study. We have three teachers in the classroom at this time and the children have the opportunity to engage deeply in their learning. At the beginning of the year much of their time is spent learning games that create community. Playing checkers, (and later chess), Go Fish, Uno, Katamino—a math game based on pentaminos—and dominos together creates a common language and shared practice upon which to build. Of late we have been using this time to work with clay and define the villain within individual journey stories.



We believe that the work of Kindergarten-aged children is real. They love the feeling of nudging up against the adult world, of cooperating for the common good in common cause. They are vigorous and compassionate, zestful and mindful in all they do. There is no better place to inhabit than the world according to a Kindergartner.



# October 2011

## And we're off

How's the school year going for you so far? Yeah, me too.

*This* is the time of year when we think? Now it just feels like a time of beginnings, when anything is possible. By New Year's Eve, everything seems...I don't know...too late. Plus, all that champagne does not make for a whole lot of sincerity when vowing to improve oneself. Or for remembering what we actually did say we'd change about ourselves.

Come to think of it, we should *make* our official resolutions on Labor Day and officially *break* them on New Year's Eve. There could be a ceremony for it. We could, I don't know, carb load, scream at our kids, and take plastic containers *out* of the recycling bin and just throw them into landfills. As a statement of full disclosure, you know, *there is no way I am going to do anything I promised I'd do this year. Deal with it.*

So, in the spirit of beginnings, I am going to offer an alternative to resolutions. Those of you who have been in my classes and groups are familiar with this: it's my 60/40 Rule of Parenting (also known as my 70/30 Rule and my 75/25 Rule, depending on whether or not I can remember what I call it. I have a hard time wrapping my brain around anything to do with math.) Here's the deal with it:

We improve our parenting 40% of the time (or 30%. Or 25%, depending on how much coffee we've had that morning) and the other 60% of the time, we do it the same old way.

None of us is flawless. None of us is immune to the stresses of raising kids. None of us is a great parent all of the time, as evidenced by my own life, when my younger son, then 7 years old, asked me, "Do people actually *pay* you for your parenting advice? Because it sucks."

But with the Ann Brown Percentage Rule, you will at least be a better parent than you would have been had you done nothing at all. Win-win. I am all about the shallow quick fix and instant gratification.

Oh, wait. Some of you don't know me yet, so let me clarify: I am NOT about the shallow quick fix or instant gratification. Yeah, I'm complicated. Deal with it.

So pick one thing. Just one thing that you really want to change about your parenting style. Maybe you want to stop arguing with your kid about brushing his or her teeth (this is what we discussed this morning in the Twos class, so it's fresh on my mind). And focus on changing how you deal with that. (Ask anyone in the Wednesday Twos class how to do that. They all know now. Hint: Only go three rounds).

Changing even one thing we are doing can make us feel like a stellar human being, which makes us feel like changing even more things. Success breeds success. Trying to change the whole deal makes us feel defeated before we even start. And then we wind up pretending we have the flu just so we can get our spouses to take care of the kid while we hide out in the basement watching re-runs of *The Facts of Life* on an old black and white TV. And calling it the best day ever.

One thing. Choose the thing that keeps you up most at night feeling guilty or frustrated and work on that.

Yeah, I realize that one thing is not necessarily 40%. Or 30%. Or 25%. I realize I should call my strategy Ann Brown's One Thing Rule. I'll work on that.

Next year.

*\*Ann Brown teaches in the Twos class. She is also available for private parenting consulting. Please contact the school office for her rates and schedules.*



It's Official: We are the Messiest!!

Last spring, the Frog class culminated its study of medieval times with the "Medieval Fair" - a day filled with activities ranging from glass blowing to fish gutting to archery. In preparation for the festivities, my job was to lash together a medieval catapult in the Marylhurst garden using rope and wood beams. One evening after work, I reached a point in the project at which I needed some additional help holding the structure up. At the time, a cleaning crew was present at the school, and one of the men from the staff was able to lend a hand. As the catapult was directed skyward, we had a chance to visit for several minutes. At this point, I made an accidental but interesting discovery about the way the children of Marylhurst behave.

Chatting while holding my wobbling structure, I learned that this man's company contracts with many other schools in the area to provide janitorial services on an as-needed basis. It turns out that my helper had spent time cleaning several other preschools, and it was his opinion that the children of MECC made the biggest messes; our school was the hardest to keep clean! (I also learned that his boss tries to get him to clean twice as many rooms in half the time, but that is a different story!) He especially "appreciated" cleaning the water trough that becomes the sand exploration zone that becomes the seed table that becomes the rice station (a.k.a. Kim Gilliam's sadistic janitor-torture device, which goes down in the Janitorial Hall of Fame as the item most loathed and despised, drawing the most cursing and spurning of all mess making devices).

In any case, after some strategic lashing I was able to get the structure standing on its own. My catapult-partner-in-crime went on his way, making sure to check on my progress each time he made a trip to the dumpster. (He seemed to be cleaning lots of excess flax seed, play-dough, and paper scraps.)

As a guy, I first considered this newfound information from a practical standpoint. It came as no surprise to me that MY KIDS are part of the crew of "greatest mess makers in the city." After all, I know firsthand my kids' lack of ability to clean up. One of the hidden values of bringing your child to preschool is that the messes they make there are not part of your mess at home! (My personal home strategy is, "don't make huge messes in the first place" – because I know who is going to be cleaning most of that mess up!)

Upon further reflection, however, one might determine that it is our rich curriculum and child-friendly environment that contribute to and even promote increased overall messiness! Mess making is a practical extension of the philosophy of cultivating and nurturing exploration. Apparently, kids LIKE TO MAKE MESSES, and this can lead to unique opportunities for creativity and imagination. Going through the doors of Marylhurst is like entering an alternate universe where KIDS ARE IN CHARGE! In this way, MECC is really set apart as the most child-friendly (and, sorry, "janitor-hostile") preschool in town. It's time to take pride in the distinction of being the messiest school and wear it like a badge of honor. Does this mean that we should all go out and get a water/rice/sand table for home use? Maybe my catapult-partner makes house calls...

Troy Stoeber  
Mice class dad to Jack



# The Stars Are Out Tonight

Annual Auction \* April 14, 2012 \* The Oregon Golf Club

## \* Auction Chat \*

Hello Marylhurst Parents,

Fall is here!! Soon those little witches and goblins will be trick or treating at our doors. And, then holidays come, quicker every year it seems. So Stacey and I wanted to take a minute and thank everyone who has been procuring those items and helping out with the auction so far.

As I mentioned early this month... Our biggest task for the auction right now is to get those procured items (big or small) so we can make this auction a success for our school and our shining stars!! Stacey and her team have been out there for a few months now locking in those big ticket items. But we still need your help with much more!!

Don't forget, we are still passing out raffle tickets for each item you procure!! Just get it in the office before November 7th, and you will be entered in a raffle for a Fred Meyer \$100 gift card!! Be sure your name is on the item before you leave it in the office. And, most importantly, stop by to see Linda, so she can enter you into the drawing. Teachers are welcome too!! There is no limit on how many times you can be entered into the drawing!! One item equals one ticket... it is that easy!!

You can pick up donor letters and procurement forms at the office. So, go out and procure those items!! And, cross something off your "To Do List" today!! Just have fun and... Support Your Shining Stars!

Dianne Kuykendall  
503.789.3597  
kuykendall@ccwebster.net

Stacey Lowry  
503.593.8427  
mrslo24@gmail.com

4- 10/20/11

### Procurement Ideas:

- Ask grandparents, aunts and uncles to help out your child's school. They donate what they can and you put it all together to buy one nice large gift card. They get the tax write-off and you get your procurement item taken care of and without spending any money out of your pocket!!
- You and your spouse are out for a nice dinner... you ask to see the manager, now you tell the manager how they can help our wonderful school with a simple gift card donation. This has been done... And it works!!
- You are getting that much needed chiropractic adjustment... and you ask "Hey how would like to help out my kids school?" This works for anything, dentist, massage therapist, manicure, pedicure hair stylist... You name it you know someone who wants to help!!

### Procured Items From Past Auctions:

- iPad / iPad2 / Laptop / Desktop (it's all good!!)
- Blu-Ray / DVD Players, TV's (40" or larger)
- Wii / Playstation 3 (you name it we will take it!!)
- Bullwinkles Family Fun Center and Restaurant
- Trailblazer Tickets, Seahawks Tickets, Portland Timber Tickets
- Oregon Ducks / Oregon State Beaver Tickets
- Plane Tickets
- Weekend in Sunriver, Oregon Coast Trip, Ocean Cruise
- Landscaping Services
- Photo Session
- Concert Tickets, Ballet Tickets
- OMSI Membership • Wine Tasting Party
- Gym Membership 6-months or a Year  
(ie Club Sport, 24hr Fitness, Bally Total Fitness)
- Host a Party of any kind in your home or a business (ie Martini, Poker, Pedicure, Girls Night Out... remember think out of this world!!)
- Gift Cards (Any and All - Restaurants, Stores, Hotels in the Portland/Vancouver area, Southern OR or another state!!)
- Experiences (ie Wildlife Safari, Jet Boat Excursions, Portland Spirit)

**The Sky Is The Limit... Go Support Your Shining Star!!**

Please join us on Saturday, November 5, from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. and help us with some projects around our school. This is a wonderful opportunity to really fill a need at our school, meet some great parents and teachers, and eliminates a few of your service hours. We will have job lists for the campus inside and out, garden work, painting, cleaning—the “to do” list just never seems to end.



## WISHES AND HOPES



### *Wishes:*



- Teacher Jeff in the Robins class would just love a Mix Master that could live in our kitchen. Jeff is inspired by working with kids in the kitchen and enjoys discovering the link to curriculum and baking! If you happen to have a mixer that you would like to donate to MECC, we will put it to good use!
- The Raccoons Class would greatly appreciate donations of baby food jars with lids.



### *Hopes:*

- Please spread the word about the film *The Race to Nowhere*, at MECC on Oct. 20<sup>th</sup>.
- We hope that all of our families enjoy dinner at Sweet Tomatoes on Oct. 21<sup>st</sup> from 5-8. Don't forget to take your flyer.
- We hope that all our families sign up and attend the conference for their child.

